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ADDRESS

DELIVERED ON OCCASION OF

Centennial Celebration

OF THE

TOWN OF MERRIMACK, N. H.

April 2, 1846.

REV. STEPHEN T. ALLEN.

Re-Printed by Vote of the Town March 14, 1899.

1901 :

AMERICAN FOLDING BOX CO., BOOK, CARD AND LABEL PRINTERS,
NASHUA, N. H.



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Gift
Miss Jennie I. Campbell
n. 30 '23

ADDRESS.

IN one of the favorite volumes of Sir Walter Scott he has introduced a personage that invariably awakens the interest and wins the esteem of all classes of readers. He is represented as going about from place to place in Scotland, visiting the graveyards, and with pious care repairing and replacing the monuments of the departed,—rubbing off the moss that centuries have gathered upon the headstones of the covenanters and other countless dead, and with his mallet and chisel cutting anew the inscriptions that “Times effacing fingers” have almost obliterated,—thus snatching from oblivion and handing down to generations to come the memory of those who are worthy to live in everlasting fame. That personage is “*Old Mortality*.”

What he is represented as doing for the by-gone generations in the land of Bruce, we, fellow citizens, have this day assembled to perform for those who have gone before us in the occupancy of the soil whereon we now dwell. After the lapse of a century since the incorporation of our town, we come together to unfold the venerable record of our fathers’ history, to review the scenes through which they passed, to look upon the spots where first they felled the ancient forest trees, and erected their humble log dwellings, and to witness in the changes which a century has effected, the products of their toil, the monuments of their prudent foresight, and the evidences of their self-forgetting care for the welfare of their descendants.

But the history of those towns that lie in the beautiful valleys of our rivers is far from being complete, when it goes no farther back than

probably in a direct line to Patucket, which, by reason of the bend in the river, would be much nearer. But Mr. Elliot's contemplated route lay along the west side, which, in going to Namaske, took him through the territory of the Souhegan Indians.

Whether that excellent man ever afterwards accomplished a tour to this region, we are not informed; but it is by no means improbable that he did, for in the same letter he says that Passaconaway, who was the Sachem of all the tribes that dwelt in the valley of the Merrimack, along its whole length, and was called the Merrimack Sachem, or more commonly the Great Sachem, joined in the importunity of the Souhegans and urged him to come up. The letter adds: "This man did this year show very great affection to me, and to the word of God. He did exceeding earnestly and importunately invite me to come and live there [Patucket] and teach them. He used many arguments, many whereof I have forgotten, but this was one, that my coming but once a year did them but little good, because they soon forgot what I had taught."

We cannot but remark in passing, that this shrewd Indian chief, himself brought up in the rudest barbarism, and but just brought into contact with civilization, showed himself on this occasion decidedly in favor of a permanent ministry.

It was the custom of Mr. Elliot, for many years, to go to Patucket in the Spring, whither the Indians from all the region round about assembled, to catch fish. The great gathering afforded the missionary a favorable opportunity to spread his net and fish for souls. It was a like motive that induced him to project a tour to Namaske.

The passing remark which he makes concerning the Souhegans is an

chusetts Assembly Records—Massachusetts Legislative Records—Penhallow's Indian Wars—Drake's Indian Anecdotes—Collections of New Hampshire Historical Society—Collections of Massachusetts Historical Society—Allen's History of Chelmsford—Proprietary Records of Brenton Lands—Farmer's Gazetteer—Belknap's and Barslow's Histories of New Hampshire.

I take pleasure, also, in acknowledging my obligations to Mrs. Charles J. Fox, of Nashville, for the privilege of consulting a manuscript History of Dunstable, by her late husband—to Rev. Mr. Felt, of Boston, for his polite attentions at the rooms of the Historical Society—to the Secretary of State, for free access to the archives of the State of Massachusetts—to Rev. Mr. Bouton, of Concord, for facilities at the rooms of the New Hampshire Historical Society—to the town clerks of Merrimack and Litchfield, and to many of the elder citizens, for their ready assistance.

item in the history of our own town of no little interest. We feel a pleasure in knowing that they who lived here *two* hundred years ago had the discernment to appreciate intellectual and moral worth, and that they were deeply interested in hearing and knowing more of the gospel.

The character of Passaconaway, their great chief, also, forms a part of our early history, for I shall show that it is more than probable that for a while he himself lived in this town. He had his headquarters a considerable time at Pennacook,—now Concord,—where there was a large tribe of that name, subject to his sway.

But in 1662 he petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts for a grant of land which he might hold in his own right and possession. In reference to this the entry on the records of the court is as follows :

“ In answer to the petition of Passaconaway, this court judgeth it meet to grant to the said Passaconaway, and his men or associates, about Naticook, above Mr. Brenton’s lands, where it is free, a mile and a half on either side of the Merrimack River in breadth, and three miles on either side in length, provided he nor they do not alienate any part of this grant without leave or license from this court first obtained.”

The boundaries of this grant are somewhat indefinitely stated, as were most of the grants in this region, at that period. But it lay next above Naticook, and must have included, on this side of the River, what is now the northerly part of Merrimack.

In connection with the fact of this grant, let it be remembered that the tribe at Pennacook, in an expedition against the Mohawks,—a fierce and savage tribe from New York,—was broken up, a large proportion of them being slain. The remainder united with the Wame-sits, near Patucket, and became *praying Indians*.

May we not without presumption infer, that in this condition of things, Passaconaway took up his abode on the territory which had been granted to him for a retreat, and that here, among the Sonhegans and near by the Naticooks, he spent the closing years of his life? That he left Pennacook is evident. If he went elsewhere than to this place we have seen no statement of the fact. Where else would he be so likely to go as on to his own possessions?

Here, then, we may imagine that this great and noble chieftain held his court. With rude splendor, and bounteous profusion, he here maintained the dignity of his rank.

“ His reputation for wisdom and cunning was celebrated among all the eastern Indians. Nor was he less renowned for his pacific spirit toward the white settlers. He was ever for peace. He had almost unbounded influence over the Indians. They believed that he had secret intercourse with the mysteries of nature ; that it was in his power to make water burn, and the trees dance. They supposed that he had power to change himself into flame, and that he could darken the sun and moon.”

In consequence of these supposed attributes, the Indians looked upon him with wonder and veneration.

In 1660 they held a great dance and feast. On such occasions the elderly men, in songs and speeches, recite their histories, and deliver their sentiments and advice, to the younger. At this solemnity, Passaconaway was present, and made his farewell speech to his children.

The warriors and the chiefs were gathered from all the tribes, and sat reverently to hear the last words of their great father. Passaconaway was gifted in all the natural eloquence of the Indian. He was deeply affected, and spoke as a dying man to the dying.

He described the happy hunting grounds, once theirs, with the stores of fish and animals which the Great Spirit had made for his red children ; and placed in mournful contrast their past independence and power with their present weakness and decay.

He explained the superior power of the white men, and told the Indians plainly that the day would come when the English would be the tenants of all the pleasant lands of their fathers. He prophesied that a war would shortly break out all over the country, and that it was only by standing aloof from it that they could hope to preserve a small seat, so that they might not be beggars in the pleasant places of their birth.

“ Hearken,” said he, “ to the last words of your father and friend. The white men are the sons of the morning. The Great Spirit is their father. His sun shines bright upon them. Never make war with them. Surely as you light the fires, the breath of heaven will turn the flame on you and destroy you. Listen to my advice. It is the last I shall be allowed to give you. Remember it, and live.”

He sat down. A cloud of sorrow passed over his brow. The Indians remained sometime musing in silence upon his words. His speech deeply excited them during the recital. His venerable appearance, his plaintive tones and sad expressions, moved them with tender emo-

tions. When he drew the picture of their melancholy decay, and compared them to the snows of winter dissolving in spring time, the Indians bowed their heads and gave way to loud lamentations.

The precise time of this chieftain's death is not known, but he lived to be more than one hundred and twenty years of age.

His eldest son and successor in the chieftainship was Wannalancet, who seems to have inherited many of the noble qualities of his father. Mr. Gookin, in his history of the Indians, describes a visit which he, in company with Mr. Elliot, made to Patucket, in the spring of 1674.

He says, that at that time Wannalancet was a sober and grave personage, between fifty and sixty years of age. He was always loving and friendly to the English, but was for a long time unwilling to receive Christianity. A great reason for his aversion was supposed to be the indisposition of sundry of his chief men and relatives, who, he foresaw, would desert him in case he turned to Christianity. He had consented to hear preaching and keep the Sabbath previous to this time.

We arrived at Patucket on the 5th of May. Wannalancet at this time lived here, and had erected a fort on the heights southeast of the falls. Hither, too, the Indians from all the neighboring tribes had again assembled to fish. On the evening of our arrival Mr. Elliot preached in the wigwam of Wannalancet, from the parable of the marriage of the king's son, Matt. 22: 1-14. On the next day Mr. Elliot proposed to him to give his answer concerning praying to God. He stood up, and after some deliberation and serious pause, made a speech to this effect:

"Sirs, you have been pleased, for years past, in your abundant love, to apply yourselves particularly unto me and my people; to exhort, press, and persuade us to pray to God. I am very thankful to you for your pains. I must acknowledge I have all my days been used to pass in an old canoe, and now you exhort me to change and leave my old canoe and embark in a new one, to which I have hitherto been unwilling; but now I yield myself to your advice, and enter into a new canoe, and do engage to pray to God hereafter."

He was told, "that it may be while he went in his old canoe, he passed in a quiet stream; but the end thereof would be death and destruction to soul and body. But now he went into a new canoe, perhaps he would meet with storms and trials, but yet he should be encouraged to persevere, for the end of his voyage would be everlasting rest."

“Since that time I hear this Sachem doth persevere, and is a diligent and constant hearer of God’s word and sanctifieth the Sabbath.”

He was always peaceable and true to the English. In the time of King Philip’s war, he rendered very great service to the white settlers, by espousing their cause and by notifying them of the intended attacks of the hostile tribes.

The Indians who dwelt in the valley of the Merrimack, were always disposed to be on friendly terms with the English settlers. Acting from their natural impulses, they were frank and confiding. They received with a kind welcome, the little band of emigrants that were destined to supplant them. They might have exterminated the intruders with a blow, and continued in the quiet possession of their hunting grounds, and of their noble river, which they enthusiastically loved. But they looked not to consequences. They understood not the forces that were against them, when civilization, with its mighty energies, came in conflict with barbarism. Alas! they have long ago entirely disappeared from these their pleasant places. Their venerated river continues its flow; their favorite rocks and fishing places are here; the hills where they pursued the deer, and the valleys where they built their wigwams, remain; but all else,—how changed! To use one of their own figures, they have melted away like the snows in spring time. Their memorials, too, are fast fading from amongst us. Here and there the plough-share turns up an arrow-head or other relic, but these will all soon disappear.

In 1689 the first war with the French, known as King William’s war, broke out between France and England. The French Jesuits that infested Canada were at this time active in wakening the prejudice of all the Indian tribes against the English settlers. By various arts and slanderous representations, they inflamed the hatred and hostility of the Indians to the highest pitch, and the history of all frontier towns during the succeeding thirty years, in which time barbarism and civilization were each struggling with a frightful desperation, is but a succession of the most revolting cruelties and massacres, which, for a time, seemed to threaten the extermination of the white settlers.

This hostile attitude of the Indians, in all parts of New England, prevented the English from extending their settlements back into the country, as they would otherwise have done. They were obliged for the sake of safety, to remain as compact as possible, and to keep themselves continually in an attitude of defence.

The old township of Dunstable, including Nashua, Nashville, Duffstable, Hollis, Hudson, Tyngsborough, and portions of the towns of Amherst, Milford, Merrimack, Litchfield and Londonderry, began to be settled in some places as early as 1673, and during the long period of Indian hostilities, to which allusion has been made, these pioneer settlers were exposed to almost incredible dangers and hardships. The story of their adventures, "with its startling romance and stern realities," would afford an instructive topic, as showing at what an expense of suffering and of blood our fathers purchased the domain which has fallen to us in quiet possession.

And inasmuch as all that portion of Merrimack which lies south of the Souhegan River was formerly included in the Dunstable township, I should be justified in drawing some materials from such a source. But I have been spared that labor.

A late gifted and now lamented citizen of Nashville,* has, with patient research and great accuracy, compiled a history of that township, which is now in the press, and will soon be given to the public. As this will be read by all who would possess a familiar knowledge on these points, I shall pass them.

Col. E. Bancroft, of Tyngsboro', has related very minutely the particulars of a tragic adventure of those times, the scene of which was in Merrimack, near Thornton's Ferry :

"On the 4th of September, 1724, the Indians fell on Dunstable, in the evening, and took two captive. The persons taken were Nathan Cross and Thomas Blanchard, who had been engaged in the manufacture of turpentine, on the north side of Nashua river, where Nashua village now stands. At that time there were no houses or settlements on that side of the river. These men had been in the habit of returning every night, to lodge in a saw mill on the other side. That night they came not, as usual. An alarm was given ; it was feared they had fallen into the hands of the Indians. A party, consisting of ten of the principal inhabitants of the place, started in search of them, under the direction of one French, a sergeant of militia. In this company was Farwell, who was, the next year, lieutenant under Lovewell. When they arrived at the spot where the men had been laboring, they found the hoops of the barrel cut, and the turpentine spread upon the ground.

From certain marks upon the trees,—made with coal, mixed with grease,—they understood that the men were taken and carried off alive. In the course of this examination, Farwell perceived that the turpentine had not ceased spreading, and called the attention of his comrades to this circumstance.

“They concluded that the Indians had been gone but a short time, and must still be near, and decided upon instant pursuit. Farwell advised them to take a circuitous route, to avoid an ambush. But unfortunately he and French had, a short time previous, had a misunderstanding, and were still at variance. French imputed this advice to cowardice, and called out: ‘I am going to take the direct path; if any of you are not afraid, let him follow me.’ French led the way and the whole party followed, Farwell falling in the rear. Their route was up the Merrimack, towards which they bent their course, to look for their horses upon the intervale. At the brook near Lutwyche’s (now Thornton’s) Ferry, they were waylaid. The Indians fired upon them, and killed the larger part instantly. A few fled, but were overtaken and destroyed. French was killed about a mile from the place of action, under an oak tree, now standing in the field belonging to Mr. John Lund, of Merrimack. [This tree may now be seen from the road. It is directly east of Mr. Hutchins’s, about half way to the river, by the line fence between Mr. Estey’s and land of the late Mr. John Lund.] Farwell, in the rear, seeing those before him fall, sprang behind a tree, discharged his piece, and ran. Two Indians pursued him. The chase was vigorously maintained for some time, without gaining much advantage, till Farwell passed through a thicket, and the Indians lost sight of him; and, fearing he might have loaded again, they desisted. He was the only one of the company that escaped. A company from the neighborhood mustered upon the news of this disaster, proceeded to the fatal spot, took up the bodies of their friends and townsmen, and interred them in the burying ground in Dunstable. Blanchard and Cross were carried to Canada. After remaining there some time, they succeeded, by their own exertions, in effecting their redemption and returned to their native town, where their descendants are still living.”

Sometime in the same year Mr. William Lund was taken by the Indians, and carried captive into Canada. He was one of the first settlers in this town, and owned the farm on which the oak tree above described stands. He was the grandfather of Mr. John Lund,

and the ancestor of all the Lunds that have lived in this town. During his captivity, his noble-spirited and affectionate wife, by her own enterprising exertions, converted such of her property as she best could into money, and forwarded five hundred livres,—the price demanded, —to Jacob Wendell, of Boston, to be appropriated by him for the redemption of her husband. The receipt for the money, in the handwriting of Colonel Schuyler, is now in possession of the family.* Mr. Lund was redeemed, and returned to his family, after being absent a year. His wife used playfully to say: “He is now *mine*, for I have *bought* him.”

Mrs. Chamberlain, the wife of one of the first settlers in this town, used to say that a white man, who belonged to a scouting party that was passing up the river, was killed by the Indians on the flat just above the bridge at Souhegan village. His name is not known.

It is time, perhaps, to pass from the tragic scenes which form an eventful period in the annals of the past, and to trace the footsteps of civilization, treading hard upon the heel of barbarism, and taking possession, at length, of these our now peaceful homes.

The first house that was built in Merrimack was erected by John Cromwell, a trader in fur with the Indians. He came originally from England, and subsequently from Tyngsboro', to this place in 1665. He erected his trading house on the margin of the river, about a mile below Thornton's Ferry, at a place called, from this circumstance, “Cromwell's Falls.” He here carried on a lucrative trade with the Indians. According to the custom of the time, it is said, he used his foot as a *pound weight*, in the purchase of furs; until the Indians, beginning to suspect him of cheating them, formed the resolution to murder him. This intention was communicated to Cromwell, who buried his wealth and made his escape, after having lived in town, as is supposed, a little more than four years. Within a few hours after his flight a party of Indians arrived, and not finding the object of their

* “BOSTON, January 16th, 1724-5.

“Received of Mrs. Rachell Lund, of Dunstable, Sixty Pound Bill Creditt, which she leaves with me, in consideration of my giving my Letter of Creditt to Lieut. Joseph Blanchard, on Col. John Schuyler, att Albany. Said Blanchard being bound to Canada, for to get Mrs. Lund's husband redeemed from the Indians. And if he do not make use of my Creditt above, to the value of the sum she leaves with me, I promise to repay her the same.

Per

JACOB WENDELL.”

search, they burned his habitation, the cellar of which still is, or was, recently visible.

From this time to 1722, a period of fifty-three years, we have no knowledge that any other house was built in Merrimack. At that time the place began gradually to be settled, by here and there an adventurous pioneer, who had the hardihood to brave the terrors of wild beasts and wilder savages, who, in passing from Canada to the frontier towns to commit their depredations, made this valley their thoroughfare.

It is said that Jonas Barrett was the first that came into town as a permanent settler. He built his house on the farm owned by the late Ezra Blodgett. Not long after William Howard settled on the farm owned by Caleb Pearson, Esq. Howard was a bachelor and lived alone. Lonely, indeed, it must have been in the deep, dense forest, four miles from any one with whom he could exchange a friendly word. He sometimes, it seems, felt the loneliness of his situation; and one day he sought out, by marked trees,—for there was no path,—the abode of Barrett, and found him harrowing in grain with a hemlock tree top, so trimmed as to answer the purpose of a harrow.

Howard planted the first orchard in town, and built the first cider mill; and years after his bachelor abode† was a favorite place of resort, by people in this, and even in the neighboring towns, who, in their hours of leisure, sought to share the luxury of his home-made beverage.

The southerly portion of Merrimack, together with part of Litchfield, on the opposite side of the river, was known among the Indians by the name of Naticook.

At an early period the General Court of Massachusetts granted to Major Brenton, a trader among the Indians, a large tract of land about Naticook; and it was subsequently known, indiscriminately, by the name of Naticook, or "Brenton's farm."

In 1728 this "*farm*" was owned by several proprietors; among them the heirs of Brenton, and others who had purchased shares in the lands. Most of them lived in Massachusetts; and on the 23d of August, that year, they held a meeting in Charlestown, chose a pro-

†He afterwards had a family. Jonathan Howard, his son, became a wealthy and influential merchant in Boston.

prietors' clerk, and passed orders for dividing the lands among the proprietors, according to their interests in the same, and took measures to have mills erected.

The effect of this was to encourage the immediate settlement of lands. They were bought by those who wished to cultivate the soil; and soon the woodsman's axe was heard, and busy preparations went on apace. The smoke from the log cabin, curling through the trees, and the distant low of the ox, that browsed in the meadows, indicated that a new order of things had commenced.

Among the early settlers are the names of Hassell, Underwood, Usher, Blanchard, Patten, Powers, Cummings, Temple, Lund, Spaulding, Chamberlain, Barnes, Taylor, Stearns, McClure, Aulds, Bowers, Davidson and Hill.

The farm settled by Benjamin Hassell is now in the possession of his descendant of that name. A daughter of his is said to have been the first white child born in the town. Mr. Hassell was a son of Joseph Hasell, of Dunstable, and grandson of Joseph Hassell, who settled in Cambridge, 1647.

The Underwoods settled in the rich intervale about Thornton's Ferry. Aquila lived on what is called the Wentworth place. He was moderator of the first town meeting in Naticook township, as also the first town clerk. Phineas Underwood, supposed to be his son, kept the first public house in town, which stood on the flat, east of Widow Crooker's.

John Usher was a justice of the peace, and a man of considerable note in public business. He lived on the farm now owned by Mr. Samuel Barron.

Messrs. Cummings and Patten were the leading men in the affairs of the church; and when it was organized they were chosen its first deacons. Deacon Cummings lived on the farm now owned by Mr. William McKean; and Deacon Patten lived near the school house in District No. 6. Samuel Spaulding, also, lived at the south part of the town, near where Mr. Walter Read now lives; was the ancestor of the numerous and respectable families of that name in this town.

There were three by the name of Blanchard,—Joseph, Jonathan and Augustus,—sons of Colonel Joseph Blanchard, of Dunstable. Joseph settled on the farm of the late Mr. Levi Wilkins; Jonathan, on Mr. Daniel T. Ingalls's; and Augustus, on Mr. Jacob Burnap's.

Their ancestors were highly respectable, and they were men of active business habits.

Timothy Taylor, Sen., married Rachel, daughter of Col. Blanchard, and lived on the farm of the late Dr. Goodrich. Ephraim Powers lived where Mr. Jeremiah Woods now lives. It is a matter in itself of little historic interest where these men fixed their first abode; but there is a satisfaction in associating their memory with places familiar to us.

Capt. John Chamberlain came from Chelmsford, in the year 1734, and built mills at Souhegan Falls. He received three hundred acres of land from the Brenton proprietors, on condition that he would erect a saw and grist mill. His mills were the first erected in the town. It is by many supposed that this Chamberlain is the same that killed Paugus, the Indian chief, in Lovewell's fight. But such is not the fact. They were cousins; and from a descendant of the family I learn that, to distinguish them from each other, one was called Paugus John and the other Souhegan John. The descendants of Paugus John are now living in Groton, Mass.; and the gun with which he shot Paugus is still kept by the family, and may be seen by calling upon them.

Souhegan John, as he was called, married a daughter of Lieut. Farwell, who was the only one that escaped of the scouting party killed near Thornton's Ferry, and whose death is mentioned in the narrative of Lovewell's fight. He died of his wounds on his journey home.

When Capt. Chamberlain built his log cabin,—which stood where the dwelling house of Mr. Henderson, at Souhegan, now stands,—there was but one house between him and Dunstable. He surrounded his house with pickets, to defend him from the attacks of the Indians, and commenced clearing his farm at the north end of the pond, below Mr. Herrick's. He went armed to his field, taking his wife and children with him, that he might protect them. It is said, that after he had cleared a piece of land, he raised,—the first year that he planted it,—four hundred bushels of corn. He built the first bridge across the Souhegan, at his own expense; and was the owner of a large negro slave, whom he purchased of a man who could not govern him.

Capt. Chamberlain was a man of great energy of character, strong powers of mind, and ready wit. An anecdote, characteristic of him, is related in the Annals of Portsmouth, to this effect: While he was a member of the Provincial Assembly, a resolution had been adopted by the Council, in which the Assembly refused to concur. A member

of the former, in a passion, said, "I wish the Assembly were all in heaven." Chamberlain replied, "I should not object to that, sir, were it not that we should lose the pleasure of the company of his Majesty's Council." He represented this town twenty years. He died in 1792. His sons were Josiah, Thomas, Joseph and Samuel.

From the knowledge that we have been enabled to gather of the character of the early settlers of this town, we believe them to have been an intelligent and patriotic band of men. The public spirit which they manifested, and their regard for the support of schools, and the institutions of religion, speak loudly to their praise.

In 1734 the General Court of Massachusetts granted to the district of Naticook,—then within the limits of Dunstable and county of Middlesex,—a kind of town organization ; by which they were authorized to elect town officers, and proceed in the transaction of ordinary town business.*

A meeting of the inhabitants was soon after held, at the house of Mr. Underwood, and a board of town officers was chosen, partly from the west and partly from the east side of the river.

Within a month another meeting was called to take measures for building a meeting house. The dimensions of the house were determined, and the location fixed. From this time to April 2, 1746, a period of twelve years, the early settlers,—on what is now Merrimack and Litchfield,—acted under a common organization. Their town meetings were holden, sometimes on one side of the river and sometimes on the other. By their joint exertions and contributions they built what is now the old meeting house, in Litchfield. The frame was erected in 1736, but it was not entirely finished for some years afterwards.

* In the House of Representatives, July 3d, 1734.

Ordered, That Mr. Aquila Underwood, one of the principal inhabitants of the new township at Naticook and lands adjacent, be and hereby is, fully authorized and empowered to assemble the free-holders and other inhabitants of said township, lawfully*qualified, to choose town officers, to stand until the anniversary meeting in March next.

Sent up for concurrence.

J. QUINCY, *Speaker*.

In Council, July 3d, 1734.

Read and concurred in.

J. WILLARD, *Secretary*.

July 4th. Consented to.

J. BELCHER.

It is not known how they took the name Litchfield. At the time of which I am speaking, the place was known, in court records, as the township of Naticook; in their town records it was called Litchfield.

Early measures were taken by them, after they had erected a house of worship, to settle a pastor. They first extended a call to Mr. Josiah Brown, which was unsuccessful. The following year they invited Mr. Isaac Merrill to become their pastor; he accepted the call, but before his ordination it was discovered that the people were not unanimous, and they did not proceed.

At the present time,—when well-beaten roads for carriages make communication with different parts of the country easy, and railroads carry us with such speed through the length of the land,—it strikes us as very odd, to see an article like the following, in a warrant for a town meeting, viz.: “To see if the town will send a man and horse to Boston, to fetch up a minister.” They did send Alexander Parker, with a horse, who, on his return, brought up a young man,—Mr. Joshua Tufts.

Not many months after, another town meeting was called, and Deacon Jonathan Cummings, of the west side, and Mr. James Nahor, of the east side of the river, were appointed a committee to go to Newbury, to treat with Mr. John Tufts about having his son, Joshua, to preach in Litchfield.

This little incident, trifling in itself, suggests to our mind a feature in the spirit of those times, that is pleasant to recall,—the deferential respect shown to parents;—manifesting itself not only in youth, but in manhood. So far from indicating a servile spirit, it is the evidence, rather, of a magnanimous, a noble feeling.

Mr. Tufts was unanimously invited to settle, provided he would sign six articles which they proposed, and get the advice of Rev. Mr. Parker, of Dracut, and Rev. Mr. McGregore, of Londonderry, for the same.

At the time that he was ordained over the province of Litchfield, or Naticook, there were twenty-six voters on the east side of the river, and twenty-one on the west. His salary was three hundred pounds, old tenor, for settlement, and one hundred and fifty pounds, old tenor, annual salary. [One hundred pounds, old tenor, was equal to twelve pounds lawful money, or forty dollars.]

Mr. Tufts was graduated at Harvard University, in 1736; ordained in Naticook, 1741; and left, in 1744, before what is now Merrimack and Litchfield had a separate organization.

Hitherto, the line between the States of Massachusetts and New Hampshire had not been definitely settled, and Naticook had been under the jurisdiction of the former State. When the limitations were finally fixed, and we ceased to belong to the government of Massachusetts, the inhabitants of Naticook, on the west side of Merrimack River, petitioned for an act of incorporation for a town, which should embrace all the territory between Souhegan River and Pennychuck Brook; bounded east by the Merrimack River, and west by a line running due north from Pennychuck Pond.*

One hundred years ago, this was incorporated, by the name of *Merrymac*. The act of incorporation is dated April 2, 1746, signed by *Benning Wentworth*, his Majesty's Governor in the Province, and it confers the usual privileges granted to towns, and makes the reservation usual in those days, viz.: "Of all the white pine trees growing, or being, or that shall hereafter grow on said land, for the royal navy."

Col. Joseph Blanchard was authorized to call a meeting of the inhabitants, for the purpose of organizing and choosing town officers. Not many weeks after that meeting,—true to the New England spirit, that made the district school and the sanctuary indispensable parts of a town organization,—they held another meeting, to choose a committee to "hire preaching, and to order the place to have the preaching at." The history of the church forms a leading part in the early annals of all the towns in New England.

In braving the dangers of the deep,—the privations and exposures that awaited them, in this, their wilderness home,—our fathers 'were

* The boundaries specified in the charter are as follows: "Beginning at the river Merrymac, where Pennychuck brook comes into that river; then by the said Pennychuck brook to Pennychuck pond; then due north, by the magnet, to Souhegan river; then by that river to Merrimack river; then on the west side of Merrimack river to the place where it first began; and [they] that shall inhabit the same be, and by these presents are, declared and ordained to be a town corporate, and are hereby erected and incorporated into a body politic, and a corporation to have continuance forever, by the name of Merrymac."

The boundaries specified in the second charter, dated June 1, 1750, are as follows

actuated by the most sublime and holy motives. They sought, not to enrich themselves with this world's good, or to make themselves a name, but they sought "freedom to worship God."

Wherever they planted their feet and established their abode, the first forest trees were no sooner felled, than they turned their thoughts to the erection of a house for God, and a minister to preside at his altar. The luxuries, and even the comforts of life, they could forego, —they were content to live in humble cottages of unhewn logs, and, if need be, to adopt a coarse and scanty fare,—but religious privileges they could not sacrifice. They sought for themselves and for their children a home and habitation on high; and to make, if possible, sure their aim, they observed, with reverent care, the Sabbath day. As oft as it returned they were seen,—the aged and the young,—bending their way, through forests deep it may be, guided in their weary path by marked trees, to the house of God. I have been told by an aged lady in this town, that it was her custom, and the custom of her neighbors, to walk from three to four miles to meeting. Nor did the young mother esteem it a hardship to conduct thither, on her errand of devotion, three or four young children; and, like Hannah of old,—the mother of Samuel,—present them before the Lord.

Nor was it a vain or useless labor, thus to honor an institution of God's appointment. They were happier during the hours of the holy day; and, by a change of scene and change of employment, they were refreshed for the toilsome duties of the week; and, more than all, their minds and their hearts were invigorated by holy contemplations, while they dwelt upon the sublime realities of a future life.

Reminiscences of Sabbaths thus spent, still linger in the memory of the aged among us. How cordial was their greeting, as often as they met; and how affectionate the intercourse of those who, by a community of hardships and hopes, were closely knit together.

We find the first settlers of this town, among their earliest move-

"Beginning at a place three miles north of the bridge over Souhegan river, at John Chamberlain's house, and from thence to run east, by the needle, to Merrymac river, and to extend that line west from the place three miles north from the bridge aforesaid, until it intersects a line on a point north, by the needle, from the northwest corner bound of the town of Merrymac, heretofore incorporated; to bound westerly on that line, and on Merrymac river easterly, and on Souhegan river southerly; shall be, and hereby is annexed to, and united with the town of Merrymac, with all the inhabitants that are or shall be thereon," &c.

ments, taxing themselves largely to sustain, a part of the time, the preaching of the gospel. For the first year or two they enjoyed the occasional labors of the Rev. Daniel Emerson, of Hollis.

In the year 1748, a Mr. Cheever supplied them, who, as far as is known, was the first minister regularly employed in Merrimack, after its incorporation. At this time they had no public place of worship. Their meetings were holden from house to house; and not infrequently, we believe, the barn served them instead. They met in different parts of the town; sometimes near Thornton's Ferry, sometimes at Col. Blanchard's, in the west part.

If they had less of the outward comforts and attractions that now belong to the house of God, they doubtless were none the less sincere in their worship. They were not the less wakeful, it may be presumed, though the rough slab or the scaffold beam served them, instead of a cushioned pew with carpeted floors. Nor were their songs of praise less in unison with the pious emotions of their hearts, though they were not echoed from the vaulted roof, or accompanied with the deep-toned organ.

Hitherto we have spoken mainly of that portion of Merrimack which lies south of the Souhegan river. It is time that we turn to the history of the other part of the town.

It has been stated, that as early as 1662, a grant was made, embracing what is now the northerly part of Merrimack, to the Indian Sachem, Passaconaway. How long he retained it in possession, or what disposition he made of it, we do not know. But it seems that, by some means, it reverted again to the government; for, in 1729, John Richardson, Joseph Blanchard, and divers others, being at that time some of the proprietors of Brenton's farm, petitioned for a grant of land adjoining said farm, of the contents of twenty-one square miles, lying directly north, on both sides of Merrimack River. According to the records of the court, it was

"Voted, that the prayer of the petitioners be granted, provided they shall, within three years, lay out sixty house lots, compacted, and in a defensible manner, and set apart one lot for the first minister, and one for the ministry, and one for the school; and fifty families on the place do each build a house on his lot, and fence and break up three acres of land; and the society settle a learned and orthodox minister, and build a meeting house for the worship of God within the town,

* * *

Unless the conditions shall be complied with within the term, the lands shall be forfeited to this Province."

Such were the conditions on which the grant for the proposed new town was made. I introduce them for the purpose of showing that whatever the motives of individuals and private speculators might have been, in seeking grants of new townships, it was the steady aim of the government to grant land no faster than would be for the social, moral and religious advantage of the settlers,—to encourage them to penetrate into the forest no faster than they could carry along with them the means of safety and improvement.

A few settlements may have been made at that time, on the tract of land above mentioned, but the conditions of the grant were not fulfilled; no meeting house was erected,—no minister was settled; consequently the instrument became null and void.

About sixty years previous to this period, the country had been involved in a most troublesome war, with the Narragansett or Pequot Indians, who were headed by the far-famed chieftain, Philip of Mount Hope. This was attended with the most revolting cruelties. Many towns in Massachusetts were sacked, and the inhabitants subjected to the inhuman tortures of their merciless foe. At length the enemy was scattered, and Philip was shot through the heart by one of his own men, whom he had offended, as he was flying from a pursuing party out of a swamp,—August 12, 1676.

A few of the soldiers, who had been engaged in this war, were still surviving. Like the patriots of the Revolution, they had merited their country's gratitude. In consideration of the services done by them in that war, the General Court of Massachusetts granted to the survivors, and the legal heirs of the dead, a reward of seven townships of land. From this circumstance, these were afterwards known as the Narragansett townships.

On the 6th of June, 1733, all these grantees, or their representatives assembled on Boston Common, and there divided themselves into seven companies, or societies, each society being entitled to a township. No. 3 and No. 4 of these towns were in New Hampshire. The former was called "Souhegan West," afterwards Amherst; the latter was called "Souhegan East," embracing Bedford, and all the northerly part of Merrimack. After this appropriation, Souhegan East began to be settled,—not, in general, by the proprietors, but by others who bought the land.

In process of time, the Blanchards and others, who held real estate on both sides of the Souhegan River,—thinking to enhance its value,

by bringing it near the centre of the town,—petitioned that a portion of Souhegan East, extending three miles north from Souhegan River, and as far west as the original town extends, might be added to Merrimack.

This charter was ratified June 1, 1750. Thus the present limits and boundaries of the town were fixed. About the same time the remaining part of Souhegan East was incorporated, by the name of Bedford.

At the first town meeting in Merrimack, under the new charter, they voted to proceed in the erection of a meeting house, and appointed a committee to make a survey, and find the exact centre of the town; who subsequently reported that it was “at a marked tree, on a knoll, about thirty rods southerly from Turkey Hill bridge.”

For reasons which are unknown, the building of the house was delayed. At each successive annual meeting the subject was under consideration; money was appropriated, different dimensions were fixed, and it was apparent that it was in their hearts to build a house unto the Lord. At length the work went on. The forest, dense and heavy, that then entirely surrounded the destined location, resounded with the woodman’s axe. The oaks hard by,—venerable with the growth of centuries,—were felled, and fitted for their place; and early in the summer of 1756, the day, so long an object of pious desire on the part of some, and of wakeful interest among all, had arrived. At an early hour in the morning, from the remotest borders of the town, the men are gathering. All are prompt, and ready to act their several parts in a scene than which none, perhaps, more joyous had ever occurred in the history of the town. None of the actors survive, to recount what transpired on that memorable day. We know, however, that the raising of a meeting house was an event of no ordinary interest. But in these days of progress and rapid execution, when villages rise up like mushrooms, and meeting houses, comfortably provided with all fixtures, can be furnished at short notice, we can but imperfectly imagine the excitement that thrilled the infant settlement on the occasion in question.

The morning of the day, we may well suppose, found their domestic matters done up in season; and we seem to see them setting off,—the active and able-bodied, with their implements in hand,—the housewives, neatly attired in their checked aprons, on foot or on pillion,—the beardless, vaunting young men and coy maidens in Sunday dress,—all wending their way to the central point of interest, where,

doubtless, in due time, were assembled nearly all of the three hundred population in town.

What deeds of strength and agility, in handling beams and rafters, -- what skill in tilting and catching pins, -- what hair-breadth escapes, -- what presumptuous adventures, in walking the giddy ridge pole, -- what notes of alarm, from prudent mothers and careful wives, -- it is not for us to report. Nor would it be of interest, at this late period, to speak of the closing scenes of that day. It is enough to remark that, as after the consecration of the Temple, Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, and on the eighth day sent the people away, and they came to their tents joyfully and glad of heart; so, by vote, on record, the town made abundant provision for all those creature comforts *once*, -- but *not now*, -- deemed indispensable at a raising.

The massive frame thus went up, without any accident to mar the happiness of the occasion; and there it has stood, almost a century, defying the fierce blasts of winter and the progress of decay, -- and seems even now capable, with proper care, of lasting a century more. Though it has been taken from sacred and appropriated to secular uses, -- though it stands solitary and alone, and seems, without and within, like one forsaken, -- yet, who can pass that ancient sanctuary, with the graveyard hard by it, without emotion? We may call it a homely structure, -- and, compared with an improved architecture, it may be homely, -- yet, it is unique and perfect in its kind. It belongs only to New England. It is a Puritan structure -- unprepossessing, simple, substantial. The like are now but rarely seen, and soon will all be gone. But centuries to come will approve and applaud the New England men, who worshipped in square pews, and the New England ministers, who preached with a subduing power from high pulpits.

It is interesting to trace the history of the successive efforts that were made by the early settlers of the town, to secure for themselves and for their children the advantages of a settled ministry. As early as 1755, -- the year before the erection of the meeting house, -- and when the population of the town was probably less than three hundred, we find them voting to settle a gospel minister, "as soon as the town shall find a good opportunity, and a man that is agreeable to the inhabitants."

At the same meeting they voted to give Mr. Josiah Stearns the first invitation to become their minister. Mr. Stearns was graduated at Harvard University, in the class of 1751. The town were unsuccessful

ful in this, their first attempt ; but they continued, from year to year, to raise money, according to their scanty means, to procure preaching, and were supplied by different ministers. One year they appropriated their money to employ Rev. Mr. Houston, who was, about that time, settled in Bedford.

In 1762, August 30, at a meeting called for the purpose, it was voted, "that the town inclines to do something, with regard to joining with Litchfield in the settlement of a minister." The proposition had been made,—and was favorably entertained by both towns,—that they should unite, on terms which will be explained in the following resolution, passed at the above meeting :

"Whereas the people may be much better settled and supported by joining the towns of Merrimack and Litchfield in the expense ; [of maintaining a minister,] therefore voted, that William Auld and others be a committee of the town, fully authorized and empowered to make a proposal to the town of Litchfield, or any committee appointed by them ; that the town of Merrimack will support one half the charge, in settling and supporting a minister, or they will support him by poll and estate. Such an one shall be agreed on by the inhabitants of both towns, who shall preach, according to the pay, in each town. Both meeting houses shall be properly finished, at the charge of each town, so that they shall be convenient for the people to meet in."

The town of Litchfield were unanimously inclined to such an arrangement, and the affair seemed to be in a way to be consummated ; but when it was made a condition that we should move our meeting house from the centre of the town, and place it on the river bank, the town were unwilling to comply, and the matter was dropped.

We cannot but notice here the reciprocal attitude, which the churches of Merrimack and Litchfield have sustained to each other. For twelve years the towns were united, under a common organization, and worshipped together. Subsequently, for a few years, there was no church in Merrimack ; and those in this town, who sought the communion and fellowship of Christian brotherhood, were united with the church in Litchfield, from which they removed their relation when our church was formed.

In the course of events, the church in Litchfield, a few years ago, became similarly situated. They were without a pastor, and the little band,—diminished by death and removals,—sought, by a temporary union with the church in Merrimack, the enjoyment of Christian ordi-

nances, and the fellowship of Christian sympathy, under circumstances quite similar to those in which the two churches came together ninety years before.

In 1767, August 11, the town of Merrimack invited Mr. Simeon Miller to become their pastor. Mr. Miller was graduated at Yale College, in 1762.

This call being unsuccessful, they, three years after, invited Mr. Obadiah Noble. They were not entirely unanimous in this; and it is interesting, at this late period to observe, in the history of the transaction, something of the spirit and character of those times.

The settlement of a minister was an event in which all felt a lively interest. It was not a temporary arrangement, but one which they desired to be permanent. They therefore moved deliberately and cautiously. Their candidates were on probation a sufficient time to give opportunity for mutual acquaintance. Mr. Noble was here between one and two years. When the people were called to act they acted advisedly. A majority were in favor of retaining him; but a protest, signed by twenty-five men, was brought into the next town meeting. It is in the words following:

“We, the subscribers, being inhabitants of the town of Merrimack, do protest against the settling of Mr. Obadiah Noble, a gospel minister, in said town; and for the reason that we cannot, in conscience, commit the care of our souls to him.”

But the town were not to be deterred by such a formidable protest. They renewed the call, at a subsequent town meeting, and appointed a committee to urge its acceptance. In those days majorities ruled; but Mr. Noble, probably from considerations of prudence, withdrew.

It is understood that those who signed the protest were of the Scottish families that came from the north of Ireland, and settled in this region. They brought with them a strong attachment, not only to the doctrines, but to the discipline of the Presbyterian Church. The other settlers of the town, coming from Massachusetts, had an equally strong attachment to the Congregational mode of discipline; and they, being in the majority, formed a Congregational Church, while in Bedford the Scottish settlers were in the majority, and formed a Presbyterian Church.

It was, doubtless, in consequence of their preference to the modes of Church government in which they had been educated, that sundry of the inhabitants of Merrimack, for a number of years, united with

the people of Bedford in religious privileges; while sundry others of Bedford united with the people of Merrimack.

Rev. Jacob Burnap was next employed to preach in Merrimack, as a candidate.

On Monday, the 23d of December, 1771, they voted to give him a call to settle, as pastor of the Church, agreeably to the Congregational method; and to pay him seventy-five pounds settlement, and fifty pounds lawful money as an annual salary. His letter of acceptance was read at the town meeting, in March, 1772, and preliminary measures were then taken for the ordination, which, in those days, was a rare occasion. During all the spring and summer the event was anticipated with impatient interest. At that time the entire population of the town was about five hundred; but preparations were made for a vast assemblage of people to witness the solemnity. Among other things a committee was appointed to lay a loose floor in the galleries of the meeting house,—to brace them thoroughly,—to put up a rough breast-work in front,—and build stairs, or ladders, to each.*

The long-expected day,—Wednesday, October 24, 1772,—at length arrived. The first minister of the town, and the man of their choice, was about to be consecrated to his holy work; and while the infant church and the more serious of the people looked upon the occasion with joy,—as the promise and the pledge of better days to come, in connection with the labors of their chosen teacher,—the less serious were also in high and ardent expectation. To all classes, in those days, an ordination afforded subject matter of lively interest and pleasure.

Thirteen churches were invited on the council, and they all were represented by their pastors and delegates. They were Chelmsford, Amherst, Wilmington, Hollis, Pepperell, Middleton, Reading, (North,) Reading, (West,) Reading, (South,) Litchfield, Billerica, Dunstable, Goffstown.

Rev. Mr. Bridge, of Chelmsford, was Moderator, and gave the charge. Rev. Thomas Haven, of Reading, preached the sermon, from Titus, iii. 8. “This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God might be

* At this time nothing had been done to the interior of the meeting house but the laying of the lower floor and the putting up of temporary seats.

Some years afterwards “pew-grounds” were laid out, and deeded to purchasers, who built the pews themselves.

careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." Rev. Mr. Wilkins, of Amherst, gave the right hand of fellowship.

Thus were closed the solemn services which set apart a youthful pastor to a sphere of action in which he was to move for more than forty-nine years. In the lapse of those years he followed to the grave nearly all who witnessed his ordination. At length he was gathered among them, to rest; borne by those whom he had consecrated at the baptismal font, blessed at the nuptial altar, or welcomed at the sacramental table.

The Congregational Church was organized September 5th, 1771, a little more than a year before the ordination of their pastor. It consisted of ten male and three female members, viz.:

Jonathan Cummings, died 1791.
 William Patten, died 1793.
 Ebenezer Hills, died 1804, June 21.
 Jonathan Cummings, Jr., died 1787.
 Jonas Barrett, died 1793.
 Benjamin Hassell, died 1785.
 Jacob Wilson, died 1776.
 Thomas Barnes, died 1805.
 Samuel Spalding, died 1797.
 Henry Fields, died 1804.
 Hannah, wife of Jacob Wilson, died 1788.
 Sarah, wife of Samuel Spalding, died 1815.
 Rachel, wife of Thomas Barnes, died 1777.

This Church has now been organized about seventy-five years; of which time it has enjoyed the labors of a settled pastor sixty years, viz.: Dr. Burnap was pastor between forty-nine and fifty years, and received into the Church one hundred and ninety-four members; Rev. Stephen Morse was pastor three years, and received into the Church fourteen members; the present pastor has been settled seven years, and has received into the Church sixty-four members.

During the fifteen years that the Church was without a pastor it enjoyed preaching most of the time, and forty-six members were added; a considerable number of them, in connection with the labors of the Rev. Mr. Bartley, now of Hampstead, who witnessed, while here, a season of more than usual religious interest.

There has been one similar season since, though never has there been in town anything like a general revival of religion.

The whole number of members that ever belonged to this Church is three hundred and thirty-one ; the present number is one hundred and five.

The Rev. Dr. Burnap, the first pastor of the Church, was born in Reading, Massachusetts, November 2, 1748. In the year 1766 he was admitted, at the age of seventeen, a member of Harvard University. In college he was regular in his habits, and, by his amiable deportment, won the affection of his teachers. In 1770 he took his first degree, and in 1813 he received from his Alma Mater the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Soon after he left college he commenced the study of theology with Rev. Thomas Haven, of his native town.

About the time of his settlement in Merrimack, he was united in marriage to Miss Ruth Hopkins, of Reading ; but he was soon called to mourn her early death.*

Some time after he married Miss Elizabeth Brooks, of Medford, sister of the late Gov. Brooks. By her he had thirteen children : six sons and seven daughters.†

Five sons and two daughters still survive. Two of the former and both of the latter reside among us.

The following sketch of Dr. Burnap's character is abridged from a funeral discourse by Rev. Humphrey Moore, of Milford :

"The faculties of his mind were strong and well proportioned. They were calculated for extensive acquirements and usefulness, and for the formation of a complete character. His understanding was clear and quick in its operations. His reason was strong and conclusive. His judgment was sound and correct. His memory was reten-

* Her monument is inscribed : "Here lies interred the body of Mrs. Ruth Burnap, the wife of Rev. Jacob Burnap, who departed this life December 21, 1773, aged twenty-six.

"In memory of her affection, prudence, goodness, virtue and piety, I inscribe her praise, and lament her sudden death ; but not as they who mourn without hope, for I believe and expect the resurrection of them that sleep in Christ. J. BURNAP."

† Her monument bears the following : "Sacred to the memory of Mrs. Elizabeth Burnap, wife of Rev. Jacob Burnap, who died May 4th, 1810, aged fifty-two years."

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth : yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them."

tive. These powers were well cultivated. He was remarkable for *patience* of thought, by which he was peculiarly qualified for investigation. He could *dwell* on subjects till light collected and truth appeared.

“He was mighty in the Scriptures. From this treasure he filled his mind and refreshed his heart. He was well acquainted with the original languages in which the Old and New Testaments were written.

“As a preacher he was *scriptural*. In his sermons he was methodical, and his style was perspicuous. His devotions indicated a heart warmed with piety; and on special occasions they were *remarkably* appropriate.

“In his ministerial intercourse with his people he knew how to adapt his discourse and deportment to the different ages and conditions of life. By his prudence, meekness, affection, and assiduous attention, he secured their respect and friendship, and witnessed a degree of union and peace during his ministry, which but few pastors, at the present day, have the happiness to experience. In the performance of social duties he exemplified the religion which he taught. He was upright in his dealings and obliging in difficulties. He was affable to all, and still supported the dignity of his station. He was cheerful in his deportment and proved that religion is not wrapt in shades and frowns, but, like its divine Author, sheds light, and peace, and happiness where it dwells.

“In his family he was a pattern of paternal affection and instruction, and his children give evidence that his labor was not in vain.

“His light and usefulness were not confined within the limits of his own particular charge. He was often called abroad for ministerial labor. As a member of ecclesiastical councils for the settling of difficulties and promoting the good order of the churches, his knowledge of church discipline, his spirit of peace and prudence qualified him for extensive usefulness.”

He continued to preach until prostrated by his last sickness, which was only of one or two weeks' duration, when he was removed from the scenes of his earthly labors, after having been pastor of the church almost fifty years.*

* His monument bears the following inscription:

Sacred to the memory of the Rev. Jacob Burnap, D. D. He was born in Reading,

Though many years have elapsed since his death, he still lives in the fresh and affectionate remembrance of many who sat under his ministry.

After his removal the church was without a pastor until July 6, 1825, when Rev. Stephen Morse was ordained. He continued but three years, and was dismissed by a mutual council.

Mr. Morse is a native of Bradford, Mass. Graduated at Dartmouth College, 1821, and studied his profession with Rev. G. Perry, of Bradford.

The present pastor was installed May 22, 1839.

Those who have held the office of deacon in the first church are,

Jonathan Cummings,	elected	Nov. 2, 1772,	died	1791
William Patten,	"	Nov. 2, 1772,	"	1793
Jonathan Cummings, Jr.,	"	Nov. 13, 1781,	"	1787
Aaron Gage, Jr.,	"	Nov. 13, 1781,	"	1832
Solomon Danforth,	"	Oct. 23, 1787,	"	1833
Benjamin Nourse,	"	Dec. 9, 1795,	"	1818
Augustus Lund,	"	Nov. 30, 1796,	"	1815
Daniel Ingalls,	"	Nov. 23, 1815,	"	1832
Robert McGaw,	"	Sept. 9, 1831,		
Joseph Wilson,	"	Sept. 9, 1831,		

In 1829, Oct. 29, another Congregational Church was formed, composed of persons living in the extreme south part of Merrimack, in Hollis, Amherst, Milford and Nashua, under the style, "Union Evangelical Church, in Merrimack." The same year they erected a neat and commodious house of worship, which is located within the limits of Merrimack, a few rods only from the line of Hollis and of Amherst, and about equi-distant from all the towns above mentioned; from which circumstance the place has been called Centreville.

Mass., Nov. 2, 1748. Graduated at Harvard University, 1770. Ordained in this town, Oct. 14, 1772. Died Dec. 26, 1821, aged 73.

After a long and peaceful ministry,
 He died in the faith of Jesus Christ;
 He sleeps here in the midst of his flock,
 By whom he was beloved and revered,
 Awaiting a happy resurrection,
 To a new and better life.

Their first pastor was Rev. Samuel H. Tollman. Their present pastor is Rev. John W. Shepard, who was installed early in the spring of 1844.

In the civil history of the town the record of occurrences, from year to year, though interesting to the actors concerned, is so much in accordance with the usual routine, that it need not, on this occasion, occupy much of our time.

The breaking out of the Revolutionary war was the occasion of developing a spirit of patriotism in all our towns, such as had never found expression before.

Perhaps we cannot well comprehend the intense excitement that prevailed when, on the 19th of April, 1775, hostilities actually commenced, and the first blood was shed at Lexington. Heralds might be seen going in every direction from town to town, as fast as horses could travel; the bells were ringing, and drums beating the roll; little groups were collecting here and there, their countenances speaking anxiety and alarm. Soon the labors of the field were suspended, and men in their working dress, with their muskets and cartridge boxes, were rallying. They bid a hasty adieu to their wives and sisters, whose tears would flow, though they approved the heroic determination of those they loved.

It was thus that New England's yeomanry were on a sudden aroused. Brave hearts were at once determined. The yoke of foreign allegiance was thrown down, and the people came forth in the majesty of their might. "At once the country was filled with armed men. Stark was in his sawmill, at Londonderry, when he heard the news of bloodshed at Lexington, and instantly took his musket and started for the camp. Putnam was ploughing in the middle of a field. He left his plough in the furrow, unyoked his oxen, and without changing his dress, mounted his horse and proceeded to the scene of action." At that exciting period Merrimack was by no means an *inactive* spectator. A little band of soldiers hastened away to join their brave associates and defend and deliver their bleeding country. At a town meeting appropriations were freely made to furnish the soldiery with ammunition and to defray their expenses.

Think of these new settlers struggling with efforts to clear, little by little, their forest farms, and taxing themselves heavily to make new roads and to build, piece by piece, a temple to worship God;

their courageous hearts did not quail. When the note of war was sounded, from hillside and valley, a generous and brave response was heard. Dr. Burnap used to remark that this town furnished an unusual number of soldiers; that not less than forty men were employed in active service in some portion of the war of the Revolution, and that they were all strong, athletic men, capable of great physical exertion.

Some of their names remain on our records as those to whom, or to whose, families appropriations were made; but they themselves have all passed away.

At that eventful period, when the war commenced, the town was represented in the Provincial Assembly by Jacob McGaw, Esq., a man in whose prudence and patriotism they could safely confide. He was of Scotch descent and came from the north of Ireland, when quite a youth, in company with his friend, Robert Means, who was of about the same age.

It is said that on their arrival in Boston, after they had paid their passage, their funds were so nearly exhausted that they had but twenty-five cents to divide between them. And it is alike honorable to themselves and to that holy religion under whose influence they had been educated, that they spent the first day of their sojourn in this country as a day of fasting and prayer to God, that he would guide their youthful adventures. They then set forth with no patrimony but honest hearts and industrious hands, and found their way to Merrimæck, where they settled and plied their trade as weavers. To this they added peddling goods in small trunks, one going out at a time. As their little stock increased they engaged in trade on a larger scale, and it became in their view desirable that one of them should remove to Amherst. They both chose to remain in this town. To decide the point they cast lots. Mr. Means went to Amherst. In process of time they both became wealthy merchants; ranked among the most influential citizens in the county, and were the fathers of highly intelligent and respectable families.

Mr. McGaw was a useful member of society, and a staid and exemplary Christian. He died, very much lamented, in 1810, at the age of seventy-three.

Matthew Thornton was another man of note in town. He, too, was from the north of Ireland; was born in 1714, and when about two or three years of age his father came to this country and settled in Wor-

cester, Mass. Young Thornton pursued the study of medicine, and commenced the practice of his profession in Londonderry, from whence he removed to Merrimack.

In 1776 he was a delegate to the Continental Congress, and affixed his name to the Declaration of Independence. He was afterwards Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and Judge of the Superior Court of his adopted State.

Judge Thornton died while on a visit to Newburyport. His monument bears the following inscription: "Erected to the memory of the Hon. Matthew Thornton, Esq., who died June 24, 1803, aged 89 years. The honest man."

Edward Goldstone Lutwyche, Esq., an English gentleman of education and fortune, resided some years in Merrimack, previous to 1776, at Thornton's, then called Lutwyche's, Ferry. He held the highest offices of the town, and was Colonel of the Regiment in 1775, but on the Declaration of Independence he joined the English, left the country, to which he never returned, and at the close of the war his estate was confiscated to the State.*

His mother continued to reside here until her death. She left a small legacy to the town. Her monument may be seen in the graveyard at Thornton's Ferry.

Dr. Abel Goodrich was born at Lunenburg, Mass., in September, 1761. He came to this town and settled as a physician in 1784, and resided here until the time of his death, which took place January 12, 1841, in the 80th year of his age. He was a man of strong and vigorous powers of mind and had a natural fondness for the study of medicine, in the practice of which he acquired great celebrity and performed an amount of professional labor equalled by few. He possessed an open and candid mind, and maintained great independence of character. He was inflexible in his integrity, and an unyielding defender of those principles which he conceived to be right. If he had strong passions, he possessed a kind heart and was actuated by the most humane and generous impulses. He never turned an indifferent ear to the call of the distressed, but went with as much cheerfulness to the abode of poverty as to the dwellings of affluence.

* He was a fine belles-lettres scholar, and had a very large and choice library which was forwarded to him in England. He was afterwards employed in the service of the East India Company, and his descendants are wealthy and highly respectable.

He was a useful citizen and eminently public spirited. "Between him and the late Dr. Burnap, his pastor and near neighbor, there existed a mutual attachment, which no vicissitude ever cooled, and only death could sever." After more than fifty years spent in the toils of his profession, he went down to the grave in his ripe old age honored and beloved.

Hon. James B. Thornton, a grandson of Judge Thornton, represented Merrimack in the Legislature several years, and was Speaker of the House in 1829. In 1830 he was appointed Second Comptroller of the Treasury of the United States. In this situation he remained at Washington until 1836, when he was sent to Peru as Charge des Affaires of the United States within that province. He died at Callao, Peru, January 25, 1838, at the age of thirty-eight, and was buried in the English cemetery at Bella Villa, near Callao.

There are in the annals of the town the names of many others who are equally worthy of our passing notice, and who have been more distinguished for their private virtues. But our limits forbid us to enlarge. Nor do they need our praise. They will live in the affections of those who knew them best, and their monuments will not grow dim so long as there are those left who appreciate Christian worth and who award the highest distinctions to those whom God delighteth to honor.

We have thus, briefly and imperfectly, reviewed the history of the men and the events of other days. We have passed rapidly from period to period and from scene to scene, but not so was it in the experience of those whose lives we record. What we pass over in an hour has occupied, in the actual occurrence, more than a century.

We make a single paragraph tell the story of years, but the filling up of those years with the unchronicled events that have transpired, has been the employment of those who now sleep in the dust.

Yes! they sleep. They who were here a hundred years ago are gone! Not one remains. Not only are they gone, but gone with them are all those busy plans which they pursued,—those objects of ardent hope and high endeavor. We leave them in their quiet graves to rest till the resurrection morning.

Here and there, as we go about the town, we see the garden plot, the cellar hole, or the moss grown well, pointing out the place where first they erected their dwellings. There they lived. Around those

stone chimneys, some relics of which even now remain, their family circle was gathered.

In their long winter evenings, when the toils of the day were done, they have recounted their adventures of hardship and danger. Or perchance nightfall has overtaken the husband when far from home, and the wife has there spent her lonely evening, watching her babes and starting at each rustling of the leaf or sighing of the wind, as if the Indian were at hand with his dreaded tomahawk to convert the abode into one of cruelty and death.

Each family has had its own history of sorrow and of joy. Children have grown up to bless their doting parents. Their childhood sports and merry laugh have relieved the loneliness of the forest. And when, perhaps, the hearts of those parents were most elated with hope, sickness has laid its hand on a favorite child. Then followed the anxious watching. The sick lamp burned till the morning. Through the long days and nights of suspense, those parents smoothed the pillow and moistened the parched lips of the sufferer till at length death crushed the fond hopes which they had raised. Then followed the funeral. In such young settlements all the families are mourners. Touch one heart with joy or woe and every other quivers with a kindred emotion. Their common hardships bind them together in the closest bonds. They weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice.

In all the dwellings of our fathers, tender ties have been sundered. Tears have been shed, and many a heart has been made desolate. But theirs was not all the experience of sorrow. The sun brightly shone when the cloud had passed, and cheerful, happy days were theirs.

In all their varying scenes of trouble and of joy, the domestic altar was the place of their resort. How quiet and how delightful the scene which closed the day. We seem to see them even now gathered at the hour of prayer. The forest is dense around them. Night frowns, and all without is dark and drear—by no means an unapt figure of what their hearts would be without the light of faith—within is a little group around the cheerful fire, bowing in humble adoration and praise.

Parents invoke the blessing of God on those who remain, and on the children that have gone from the parental roof. When they lay themselves down to rest they know not what scenes of savage cruelty they may pass through ere the morning. But in the confidence of filial

trust they commend themselves to God, and their sleep is sweet and undisturbed.

In sketching a history of the early settlers of the town, we have only here and there a meagre record of what they did. We naturally feel a desire to enter within the outer veil, and, in the sanctuary of their thoughts, their motives, and their affections, study their individual character.

Most of them were descended from a race of men who cannot be too highly appreciated. Coming from the Eastern part of Massachusetts, they belonged to the Puritan stock, than which a nobler or a better never lived.

In many essential features we may believe that they were like them. Nor were the Scottish settlers less honorably descended.

We do not pretend that they were never mistaken in their views of truth and duty; that they did not have all the passions and prejudices that belong to human nature, but that they brought with them into these forest abodes many noble sentiments, and high and holy purposes, we do not doubt.

If they were not enlightened in the general range of the sciences, their minds were enlightened by an intelligent and prayerful study of the word of God. They entertained an habitual reverence for God and his ordinances. Profanity was unknown among them, and if one was absent from meeting on the Sabbath he was supposed to be sick. The Bible was their pole star and their guide.

They sought with anxious care the prosperity of the church, well knowing that without the elevating and ennobling influences of a pure Christianity their free institutions could never prosper.

They were men of public spirit. "Next to genuine religion this is the noblest trait of the human character; and it is never found in its highest excellence separate from religion." They were *public spirited* from the highest motives. No partizan zeal or plan of self-advancement swayed their general purpose. To enjoy a free government, make provision for the education of their children, maintain the public worship of God and live in the smiles of his approval, were the ruling objects of their life.

Such were the men of other days. Here they have lived; here they have labored; here they have died. The century which swept them away has closed. We assembled today to commemorate their worth and treasure in our minds their virtues.

Looking forth from the confines of another century, we remember that through the changes which they have passed we also must go.

It is said of Xerxes, the famous Persian general, that when he reviewed his vast army, assembled on the plains of Asia, he was observed to shed tears. When interrogated as to the cause, "I weep," said he, "to think that in a hundred years not one of all this assembled multitude will be living."

One hundred years hence, yonder river will continue its flow ; the opening Spring will melt the snows from our valleys and wake the cheerful song of birds ; the sky above will spread out its cerulean canopy, but all else how changed !

In the progressive march of improvement we can hardly conjecture what changes may be wrought ; what thriving villages may spring up ; what improvements in agriculture may convert the sterile plain into fruitful fields ; what acquisitions may be made in human science ; what triumphs over the degradation of vice ; what advances in the means of human enjoyment, and what diffusion of a spirit of holiness.

Whatever they may be, it is certain that we shall not be here to witness them. Other generations will stand in our places, and some one, perhaps, with antiquarian zeal, in collecting the material for another century's history, will carefully remove the moss from our grave stones and there learn the brief story when we were born and when he died.

What contempt—permit the remark—do such reflections pour on the pursuit of the fleeting honors and perishable possessions of this world. Phantoms they are, that soon pass away !

Would we attain the high purpose of life, and leave an enduring memorial behind us, would we perpetuate the institutions which our fathers have established, and live in the grateful remembrance of coming generations,—let us be true to New England, the Puritan, spirit.

It is not a fertile soil, it is not abounding wealth, it is not fine streets, nor elegant houses that make a town. It is *men*,—men moved by a spirit of patriotism,—disinterested, public spirited, virtuous men.

It is our lot to live where the purest influences surround us, and the noblest models are before us. We are encompassed with motives that are suited to elevate our aims, and stimulate our aspirations for attaining to the true dignity of men.

Aside from the living influences, we have the great examples of wisdom, and genius, and patriotism of the illustrious dead. "The living and the dead are but one family, and the moral and intellectual afflu-

ence of those who have gone before us, remains to enrich their posterity.

“The great fountain of human character lies beyond the confines of life. It is there that the spirits of all ages, after their sun is set, are gathered into one firmament to shed their unquenchable light upon us.

“It is in the great assembly of the dead, that the patriot and the Christian complete their benefaction to mankind, by becoming imperishable examples of virtue.”

The great and the good,—our ancestors of revered memory, the pilgrims and the patriots,—are looking down upon us. The record of their life, sacred to fame, is before us.

By the contemplation of their virtues, let us add vigor to ours, and thus emulate and equal them in whatever is noble in conception, excellent in purpose, and great in achievement.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

At the annual town meeting in Merrimack, March 10th, 1846, it was suggested that the Centennial Anniversary of the incorporation of the town would be on the second of April; whereupon the town voted, unanimously, to celebrate the day with some appropriate exercises.

The following gentlemen were appointed a committee to determine in what way the day should be observed, and make all the preliminary arrangements:

James U. Parker,	Robert McGaw,	Ira Spalding.
Stephen T. Allen,	Simeon Kenney,	Joseph B. Holt,
Sam'l McConihe,	Leonard Walker,	Jacob Burnap,
Nathan Parker,	Aaron Gage,	Dan'l L. Herrick,
Oliver Spalding,	Samuel Barron.	

The committee subsequently held a meeting, and voted that, inasmuch as the annual state fast occurs on the second of April, the celebration should occur on the third; that an address be delivered at the meeting house of the First Congregational Society; that a public dinner be provided; and that the native sons and daughters of Merrimack be invited to return and participate in the exercises of the occasion.

Robert McGaw, Esq., was appointed *President of the Day*.

Nathan Parker, Esq.,
Samuel McConihe, Esq., } *Vice Presidents.*

Mr. Joseph B. Holt,
Capt. Ira Spalding, } *Marshals.*

The third of April was a beautiful day. The cheerful notes of the spring birds hailed its dawning, and filled the air with their soft and stirring music. The sky was clear and bright. Bright and happy faces, too, there were, for, though the notice had been short, and all the preparations hasty, yet the interest in the occasion had from day to day increased, until now there was scarcely an individual in the town who did not welcome it with joy.

A long time before the hour of meeting carriages were in motion, strangers were coming into town, and crowds were gathering. At eleven o'clock a procession was formed, under the direction of Capt. Ira Spalding, and marched to meeting house preceded by a band of music.

When the audience had filled the house and were seated, the President of the Day, after a brief and appropriate address, announced the exercises, which were performed in the following

- I. Voluntary on the organ.
- II. Reading the Town Charter, by James U. Parker, Esq.
- III. Invocation and Reading the Scriptures, by Rev. J. M. C. Bartley, of Hampsted.
- IV. Anthem: "Wake the Song of Jubilee."
- V. Prayer, by Rev. Thomas Savage of Bedford.
- VI. The forty-fourth Psalm from Sternhold and Hopkins' version "deaconed," two lines at a time, by Rev. William Miltemore, of Litchfield, and sung by the Choir, in the manner of olden time:

"1 We with our ears have heard, O God,
Our fathers have us told,
What works thou wroughtest in their days,
Ev'n in the times of old.

"2 How thy hand drave the heathen out,
And planted them thou hast:
How thou the people didst afflict,
And out thou didst them cast.

"3. For by their sword they did not get
The land possession,
Nor was it their own arm that did
Work their salvation;

"4. But thy right hand, thine arm also,
Thy countenance's light;
Because that of thine own good will
Thou didst in them delight.

"5. Thou art our King, O mighty God,
Thou dost the same endure;
For Jacob by commandment
Deliverance procure."

- VII. Address, by Rev. Stephen T. Allen.
- VIII. Original hymn, by Miss Laura Ann Wheeler, of Merrimack; read by Rev. J. G. Davis of Amherst, and sung by the choir:

One hundred years have passed
A century has fled;
The fathers of our native land
Are sleeping with the dead.

They dared a savage foe,
To build for us a home;
The Indian left his native wood
To give the white man room.

This day bears ample proof
Our sires are not forgot,
Though time within this lapse of years
Hath many changes wrought.

We fill their places now;
 We tell our mercies o'er;
 O may the blessings now enjoyed
 Continue evermore.

God grant us grace divine,
 Lead us in wisdom's way,
 That we in heaven may celebrate
 Our next centennial day;

IX. Prayer, by Rev. John W. Shepard of South Merrimack.

X. Benediction, by Rev. William H. Porter of Litchfield.

The singing performed by the Choir of the First Congregational Society, assisted by some singers from the south part of the town, and by Miss Smith at the organ, was excellent.

THE DINNER.

After the benediction, a large number, both of ladies and gentlemen, again formed in procession and repaired to a spacious hall, at the hotel of Mr. J. Nevins, where the tables had been spread for dinner. A blessing was implored by Rev. Mr. Miltemore. It was delightful to witness and to participate in the quiet and cheerful flow of social feeling which followed. Those who had been friends and acquaintances in former times were brought together under circumstances that would revive the most pleasing recollections. And it is due to the host and his lady to say that the tables were tastefully arranged, and the provisions rich, varied and abundant.

After the repast, two or three hours were spent at the tables, in the interchange of sentiments, and in addresses, interspersed with songs and other music.

Robert McGaw, Esq., the President of the Day, led on the way by some spirited remarks, and then called on

Rev. Mr. Savage, of Bedford, who, in his usual felicitous manner, alluded to the friendly relations that had for many years subsisted between Merrimack and Bedford:—said that, for a long time, when Bedford was without a pastor, Dr. Burnap was called to attend their weddings and officiate at their funerals; that, in the course of events, Merrimack was without a pastor, and he had been called to reciprocate the labors of Dr. Burnap. The two towns seemed, as it were, but one parish. It gave him great pleasure to be present on this occasion. He believed the exercises of the day could not but be most happy in their influence upon the town.

Rev. Mr. Davis of Amherst, followed with some timely and excellent remarks upon the character of the early settlers of New England, showing, by a variety of facts and illustrations, that it was the Puritan element that had made their descendants what they are; that it was their piety that had laid so deep and firm the foundations; that to that piety, more than to anything else, we are indebted for those features in the New England character and New England institutions, that are most approved and admired; that independently of such piety it is impossible to form such characters,—impossible to perpetuate them.

The remarks now became more free and familiar, not that the company were getting elated by the vulgar stimulants of the cup, for it was a temperance feast; but they were keenly alive to the enjoyment of the "feast of reason and flow of soul" which the occasion afforded.

James U. Parker, Esq., entertained the company, in a cheerful way, with the rehearsal of some anecdotes of the olden time, and read a letter from

Henry T. Ingalls, Esq., of New York, in which, among other things, he said:

"It would give me great satisfaction to meet again, in the place of my nativity,

friends who still remain, and others occupying the places of those who have passed away, on the interesting occasion to which you allude. But I regret to say that circumstances beyond my control deprive me of the privilege. My sympathies will be with you. A thousand recollections of early associations are rapidly crossing my mind as I write,—some of a pleasing, others of a sad, nature. Many friends,—good friends, too,—have passed to the ‘dark realms of shade;’ while others,—thanks to a kind providence,—still remain.

“Nature, too, in her general outlines, is there in all her former beauty. Though not at present wrapped in her mantle of green, the swollen streams proclaim that she soon will be. Her noble Merrimack, her lively Souhegan, her hills and vales, with their sturdy oaks and majestic elms, and here and there a glorious ‘old hickory’ still remain. Of the latter, it would seem, there are but few; but I trust there are sprouts left, which will, ere long, shoot up in sufficient numbers to overshadow your town and state, and give you fresh ‘nuts to crack.’

“Please express to the good people of Merrimack my thanks for their kind remembrance of me, and my best wishes for their permanent prosperity and happiness.

There were no regular sentiments prepared for the occasion, but now and then one was volunteered. Some of these cannot be recalled, and some others we give in substance.

Sentiment by Samuel McConihe, Esq.

“The first settlers of this town:—May their memories be cherished, and handed down to generations yet unborn.”

Sentiment by Mr. Jacob Burnap.

“Departed friends:—We loved them,—we love them still. While we approve, may we emulate their excellencies.”

Mr. Bolston, of Amherst, was now called up. He made some very pleasant remarks with regard to the town of Merrimack;—spoke of its past and its present character; and in fluttering terms alluded to the progress that had been made in the cause of temperance, in the enterprise of the inhabitants, and development of a public spirit. He said: “We have been told that the name Merrimack signifies sturgeon. Now, the sturgeon is a very active fish, and sometimes leaps out of water; but he is obliged soon to go back again. He hoped it might be so: that if any in the town had forsaken, for a little time, cold water, they would go back to the natural and healthful element.”

Rev. Mr. Miltemore, venerable with years, arose and with deep emotion, addressed the company. He spoke of the associations awakened in his own mind by the exercises of the day, and especially by the singing of the Psalm in ancient style; said it carried him back to the days of his youth, and brought up fresh the memories of other years. He paid a high and merited tribute to the virtues of the pious dead, and expressed the hope that they might live in the lives of their descendants.

Sentiment by Mr. C. T. Nourse.

“Our ancestors:—As we glory in being their descendants, may the same impel us to copy their virtues.”

Rev. Mr. Porter, of Litchfield, was also called on. He expressed his gratification in being permitted to represent a town whose history had been so intimately interwoven with that of Merrimack in former years. In a happy manner he alluded to the fact that the two towns were once united under a common charter; settled their first minister together; subsequently had reciprocated the privileges of Christian worship and fellowship; and that his own church, in its recent reorganization, was, in a great measure, a colony from the church in Merrimack.

His remarks called out the following sentiment by Dr. Eaton:

"Merrimack and Litchfield:—Twin sisters, rocked in the same cradle, but brought up in different families: may they ever go forward, hand in hand, in every good work."

The following letter from Hon. Charles H. Atherton was read:

AMHERST, N. H., March 21, 1846.

"Robert McGaw, Esq.:

"Dear Sir: Yours inviting me, in the name of the Committee of the town of Merrimack, to attend the centennial celebration of its incorporation, was received this day. I should rejoice to attend on the occasion, and listen to the address of your reverend pastor, which, I doubt not, will be classically chaste and historically interesting. But I regret to say that my health does not permit me to mingle in such celebrations. My heart and best wishes will be with you. I have, from my youth, felt an attachment to the town of Merrimack. It was the scene and place of my earliest juvenile visits. Your letter seems to imply that I was a native of the town. This is not exactly correct. I was born at Amherst, about eight months after my father removed from Merrimack.

"If you have nothing better to offer on the occasion, please accept the following from me:

"The Town of Merrimack:—May the hopes of its early settlers be realized, and its prosperity increased, with the growing usefulness of the river upon whose banks it is located, and from which it takes its name.

"Very respectfully yours,

C. H. ATHERTON.

Sentiment of Robert McGaw, Esq.

"Home Manufactures:—Let Merrimack improve her water privileges, and she will show John Bull that she has no further need of his services in that way."

Sentiment by Oliver Spalding, Esq.

"Woman:—The companion of man; in intellectual culture capable of an equality; in society, its life and ornament; in adversity, a friend; everywhere worthy of the high rank which an advancing civilization has assigned to her."

Judge McConihe, a native of Merrimack, now of Troy, N. Y., forwarded a communication for the occasion. Our limits permit us to make only some extracts. After speaking of the changes which a hundred years have wrought, converting the wilderness into fertile fields, and peopling it with a healthy, happy and intelligent population, he says:

"Here the people are in the full enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Improvements in their condition are continually going on. Every farmer, especially, sees what vast changes have taken place since the time when he was a boy. How much is now done by machinery, which was then done by manual labor; and how much more leisure time is now afforded for acquiring an education and general knowledge. Every man and every boy, able to perform the duty, had to swing the flail, shell the corn on the handle of a frying pan, and break and swingle flax till his nose was filled and his clothes covered with dust and swingle-tow. And then the women had to pick and card and spin the wool and the flax, on the great and little foot-wheels, turn the quill-wheel, and pull and push at the churn handle. Now these labors are performed by machines. A great proportion of these machines are the inventions of the New Englanders.

"And this brings me to consider for a moment the moral culture and the character of the people, as the same existed many years ago, and still exist.

"Merrimack was first settled by farmers. They were open-hearted, generous and hospitable. These characteristics are, in my opinion, more predominant among

agriculturists, than any other class of citizens. They were also industrious, economical, moral and religious. But for the cause of these great and good qualities, we must mainly look back to the examples and instructions afforded by the mothers and wives of the early settlers of this town. They taught to their offspring the principles of religion and morality from the Bible, and enforced them by example.

"The New Englanders, who are frequently called Yankees, are emphatically a peculiar people. Descended from the Saxons, they possess all the energy and enterprise of that hardy and intelligent race, and are equally fond of freedom in all its phases. It has been my fortune to travel through almost all the states and territories in this union, and I never stopped in a city or a village without meeting a Yankee and I always found him engaged in some profitable undertaking. * * * *

"After having been tossed and jostled about among strangers, and in strange places, like Ulysses, after he had taken away the palladium of Troy, I have at last, now, again (spiritually—not bodily—as I intended)—revisited the place of my nativity, with my hair,—what is left,—turned gray, and whether wiser or better, is a matter which I will not undertake to determine.

"This occasion brings to my mind many of the honored and lamented dead. Among them was the pious, kind and open hearted Dr. Burnap, who was the first settled minister in Merrimack, and who preached in the same meeting house a half century, and who, as a Christian and scholar, ranked among the greatest and the best of the age in which he lived. There, too, beside yon railroad, rest the remains of Matthew Thornton, one of the patriots of the revolution, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, who was an honor and ornament to the town and state in which he resided, and to the country which he served. There, too, by his side, rest the bones of the generous and talented James Thornton, his son, who, when I was a boy, took me to his house, there to enjoy, at his expense, the advantages of a good school in his neighborhood, declaring that I must and should receive a collegiate education. Also the McGaws, of a former generation, the Nourses, Ingallses, Danforths, Goodriches, Aikens, Gages, Lunds, and a host of others of that day,—good and valuable citizens,—have gone to that 'undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns.' There, too, by the side of the old meeting house, repose the mortal remains of my venerated parents. It is pleasant to commune with the righteous dead, who loved us, and whom we loved: and above all,—the first of all, and the last of all,—with her on whose knee the first accents of affection were lip-ed,—*my mother*. She has gone, I trust, to enjoy an immortality in another and a better world. * *

"I will barely say to the present generation, go on, as your fathers and mothers have done, in teaching and enforcing the principles of religion and morality, and in giving to all the rising generation a good education. Let every house and every fire-side be an academy of useful learning. Let woman have her full and proper sway, and generations after generations will grow wiser and better than the former, as each passes away."

Sentiment volunteered by a lady, and received with applause.

"Mothers in Merrimack:—May they so instruct their children, that, a hundred years hence, their posterity may rise up and call them blessed."

At the suggestion of some one, papers were passed along all the tables, and the signatures of those present were taken, to be preserved among the records of the town.

The afternoon passed rapidly away, and evening approached; yet many who had come there with the intention of addressing the company, had not had the opportunity.

Mr. Elijah Buxton drew up a sketch for the occasion, in which he said that his father, Elijah Buxton, was a native of Danvers, Mass. At the age of sixteen he went to take the place of his grandfather, who was a soldier of the revolution, and in 1786 came to this town, where he reared a numerous family.

Mr. B., among other reminiscences, described the old school house, where, in boyhood days, he went to school; paid an affectionate tribute to his teachers, John Betton, John McGaw, Jotham Gillis, Jacob McGaw, Jonathan Buxton, Simeon Kenney, Benjamin Taylor, Samuel McConihe; and closed with expressions of attachment and good wishes for the town, which, though it did not give him birth, gave him his education, — gave him his wife.

The following hymn was written for the occasion by Mr. C. T. Nourse of Merri-mack :

O Thou, our God, our fathers' God,
We come, with votive hearts, to trace
The fading steps our sires have trod,
And trim anew the laurel's vase.

We bring, from memory's hallowed urn,
Fresh tokens of departed worth;
And by their inspiration learn
To bless their names who gave us birth.

They sought, beneath Thy guardian wing,
A shield in peril and in storm;
Till forest wilds they taught to sing,
And wastes they decked in beauteous form.

Here may we sit beneath our vines,
With nothing but our God to fear;
And wreath our names in grand designs,
To flourish when we disappear.

The tree of freedom spreads above
A people joyful in thy care;
Still be their strength, O God of love,
And spread their blessings everywhere.

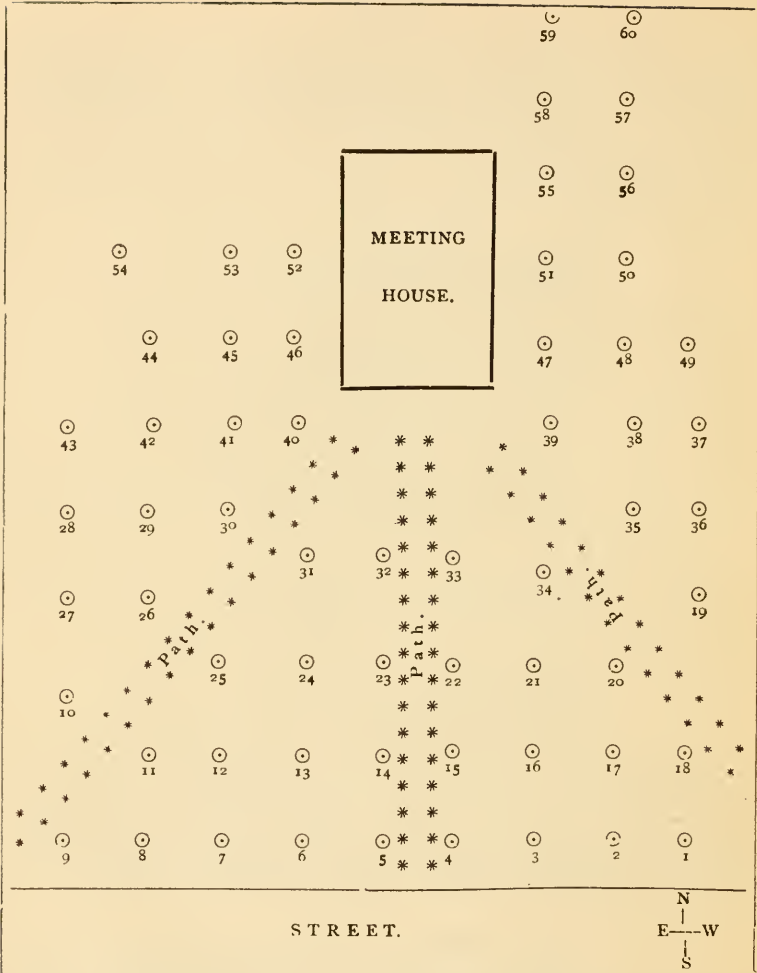
The proposal was made, and received with marked approbation, that all who chose should set out a tree, in commemoration of this centennial year.

The company now arose from the tables, and, while the band was playing, the conversation became general. With many a cordial congratulation, and warm grasp of the hand, and hearty good night, they separated to their quiet homes, with a stronger affection for their native town, a higher veneration for its past generations, and a deeper interest in the present.

CENTENNIAL TREES.

According to the suggestion above made, a large number of the citizens of the town met, by appointment, a few days subsequent to the celebration, each with his tree, and implements for planting it, and proceeded to lay out the green about the meeting house, and to determine the order and arrangement of the trees. Great pains had been taken to secure beautiful and thrifty elms, which were set out in the order of the accompanying plan. They are numbered, commencing with number one, at the southeast corner of the meeting house lot, and proceeding from right to left, and then from left to right. Numbers 59 and 60 stand upon the northerly bound of the lot. The sheds for horses prevent the carrying out of the other rows.

It will be seen that the trees stand in squares. The distance between them, each way, is two rods, leaving ample room for carriages along the diagonal path from the street to the meeting house, each way.



THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO PLANTED THE TREES.

The number against the name corresponds with the number of the tree which each respectively planted.

- No. 1 Reuben Barnes, 2d.
 2 J. N. Lovejoy,
 3 Samuel McConihe,
 4 Dr. Harrison Eaton,
 5 Massenah B. McConihe,
 6 Miss Angeline McConihe,
 7 Alonzo McConihe,
 8 John Nevins,
 9 Samuel Barnes,

- No. 10 James A. McKean,
 11 David T. Jones,
 12 Jacob Burnap,
 13 O. S. Chase,
 14 Samuel C. Nesmith,
 15 Nathan Parker,
 16 Henry Parker,
 17 C. T. Nourse,
 18 Charles H. Longa,

No. 19	Edwin W. Campbell,	No. 41	Joseph Wilson,
20	James McKean,	42	Mrs. Elizabeth Wilson,
21	William McGilvray,	43	Nathan Wheeler,
22	Robert McGaw,	44	Mrs. Lucy Holt,
23	David Jones,	45	Isaiah Herrick,
24	Reuben Barnes,	46	Rufus Blood,
25	Henry H. Eaton,	47	Mrs. Abby E. Allen,
26	Shubal Weeks,	48	James Hale,
27	Joseph Henry Wilson,	49	Ebenezer Boyson,
28	James Parker,	50	William Wallace,
29	Caleb Jones,	51	Sarah McGaw Allen,
30	Frederick A. Bartlett,		(by Catherine Kimball,)
31	Samuel Campbell,	52	William W. McKean,
32	Charles A. Damon,	53	Jonathan Jones,
33	Stephen T. Allen,	54	Simeon Kenny, Jr.,
34	George T. Boyson,	55	Miss Catherine Kimball,
35	Matthew P. Nichols,	56	Elkanah Phillips Parker,
36	Lewis Campbell,	57	Leonard Walker,
37	Joseph B. Nevins,	58	Robert W. French,
38	John Anderson,	59	Henry Fretts,
39	Mrs. Mary J. Nevins,	60	Joseph Shedd,
40	Reuben H. Pratt,		

TOPOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE TOWN.

The town of Merrimack is in the eastern part of Hillsborough county, in lat. 42 deg. 51 min. : is bounded north by Bedford, east by Merrimack river,—which separates it from Litchfield,—south by Nashville, west by Amherst, and contains 19,361 acres. It is 45 miles from Boston, 25 from Concord, 8 from Nashua, and 8 from Manchester. The Merrimack river waters its eastern border, opening a communication by water from this place to Boston. The Concord and Nashua Railroad, which passes along the bank of the river, through the whole length of the town, also affords great facilities for travel, and the transportation of commerce. There is a depot at Reed's Ferry, and also at Thornton's Ferry. There are three postoffices in town; one by the north meeting house, near Souhegan village; one at Thornton's Ferry; one at South Merrimack, or Centreville. Souhegan river enters this town from Amherst, pursues a winding course, and flows into the Merrimack near Souhegan village. There are some beautiful intervals on this stream, and several fine water privileges. One near the mouth of the river has been partially improved; formerly by cotton factories, which have since been burned; recently by a mill erected for the manufacture of woollen carpets. There are excellent falls of water, from half a mile to a mile higher up the stream, that are superior to any other on the Souhegan river, and it is a matter of surprise that they have not before this attracted the notice of enterprising manufacturers.

Babboosuck Brook, issuing from Babboosuck Pond, in Amherst, empties into Souhegan River near its mouth; and Penacook Brook, from a pond in Hollis, forms the southern boundary of the town.

This town presents no remarkable peculiarity of surface. It is generally level. Some parts of it are undulating, with fine swells of hard wood land. A considerable portion of the land is plain, is easily cultivated, and perhaps with a given amount of labor, yields more profit than a harder soil, though it is not so good for grazing. The lightest soil is well adapted to the growth of rye, which is raised in considerable quantities. There are some beautiful and rich intervals along the Merrimack.

On the northern border of the town, and in the southern part of Bedford, there are large quantities of excellent clay, and the manufacture of brick is a source of considerable wealth. There are this year, including one yard in the southerly part of Merrimack, eighteen different yards, which employ in the moulding and burning

of brick not less than one hundred hands, the most experienced of whom receive thirty, forty, and some as high as fifty dollars per month. They consume, in burning the brick, about six thousand cords of wood in a year, which, at an average value of \$2.50 per cord, would cost \$15,000. They manufacture about ten millions of brick in a year, which, at \$6.50 per thousand, bring \$65,000. A portion of the brick are pressed, and are worth more than twice as much, so that the total value would be not less than seventy thousand dollars. These bricks are carted to the river, a distance of two to three miles. This furnishes employment to the farmers in the vicinity, many of whom keep their teams constantly engaged during the summer. Not less than fifty teams are employed in this way. They receive from 4s. 6d. to 6s. per thousand for drawing. The bricks are then transported in boats to Lowell.

A large part of the city of Lowell has been built with bricks manufactured in this place and in Bedford.

Merrimack "claims the first discovery, in this region, of making what are called Leghorn bonnets. They were first made, several years since, by the Misses Burnap, who are deserving of much credit for their enterprise in this species of manufacture. Some of their bonnets have been sold at auction in Boston for fifty dollars."

The name of Merrimack is derived from the river on which it is situated. It is of Indian origin, and signifies *sturgeon*. The river formerly abounded with great varieties of fish.

The tax list for 1749, the first that is on record, embraced twenty-five names, which follow, in the order of their valuation, the first paying the highest tax, the last the lowest:

1 William Lund,	14 Dr. Joseph Barnes,
2 John Usher,	15 John Taylor,
3 Zechariah Stearns,	16 Amos Taylor,
4 Joseph Blanchard,	17 Robert Davidson,
5 Jonathan Cummings,	18 John Stearns,
6 Wm. McCluer,	19 Ephraim Powers,
7 Phineas Underwood,	20 William McCluer, Jr.,
8 Timothy Underwood,	21 Eleazer Blanchard,
9 Benjamin Hassell,	22 Elias Taylor,
10 Jonas Barrett,	23 John Chamberlain,
11 William Patten,	24 Joseph Lindall,
12 Timothy Taylor,	25 Jonathan Bowers.
13 Samuel Spalding,	

In 1759 the number on the tax list was 72.

In 1769 there were unmarried men, from sixteen to sixty, 31; married do. 65; boys under sixteen, 98; men over sixty, 8; females unmarried, 121; married, 65; widows, 9; slaves, 3; total, 400.

There were 104 polls, 377 acres arable land, and 19 acres orchard.

In 1773, unmarried men, from sixteen to sixty, 50; married do. 82; boys under sixteen, 129; men over sixty, 8; females unmarried, 170; married, 89; widows, 11; slaves, 13; total, 552.

In 1775 population was	606
1790 "	819
1800 "	926
1810 "	1048

In 1820 population was	1162
1830 "	1191
1840 "	1113

The valuation of the town in 1840 was \$430,574. In 1846 it is \$470,972.

The proportion of every thousand dollars of the state tax paid by the town of Merrimack, at various periods, has been as follows: 1789 \$5.62, 1794 \$5.24, 1804 \$4.71, 1808 \$4.20, 1812 \$3 83, 1816 \$4.20, 1820 \$4.33, 1836 \$4 29, 1840 \$4.30, 1844 \$4.79.

The number of polls in 1840 was 241; in 1846, 307.

The resources and products of the town, as returned by the census of 1840, were as follows: 174 horses, 968 neat cattle, 844 sheep, 551 swine, 213 bushels of wheat, 147 bushels of barley, 7150 bushels of oats, 4772 bushels of rye, 908 bushels of buckwheat, 6463 bushels of corn, 14,969 bushels of potatoes, 1532 pounds of wool, 1480 tons of hay. The estimated value of the products of dairy was \$5,784. There were four retail stores, with a capital vested of \$12,400. There were six grist mills, and six saw mills.

LIST OF PROFESSIONAL MEN, ETC.

The following persons from Merrimack have passed through a collegiate course. The college and year of graduation are against the names:

Jacob McGaw, Dartmouth, 1797; studied law with Thomas W. Thompson, Esq., Salisbury. Settled in Bangor, Me.

Matthew Thornton, Dartmouth, 1797; son of Judge T.; studied law at Amherst; opened an office in this town, and died soon after.

Horatio Gates Burnap, Harvard University, 1799; engaged some years in teaching; now lives in this town.

Timothy Fuller, Harvard University, 1801; many years a distinguished lawyer in Boston; a representative from Massachusetts in Congress. Removed to Groton, Mass., where he died in 1834.

Isaac McGaw, Dartmouth, 1807; read law with Jacob McGaw, Esq., Bangor, and with T. Jameson. Settled in Windham, N. H.

Henry Holton Fuller, Harvard University, 1811; now a lawyer in Boston.

Isaac McConihe, Dartmouth, 1812; studied law in Troy, N. Y., and has since practiced in that city, and been Judge in one of the courts in that state.

William W. Fuller, Harvard University, 1813; a lawyer in Fayette, Me.

Elisha Fuller, Harvard University, 1815; commenced practice of law in Concord, Mass.; since moved to Worcester.

James Buonaparte Thornton, Yale; studied law with Judge Chapman, Con.

George W. Burnap, Harvard University, 1824; pastor of the First Independent Church, Baltimore, Md.

Francis Burnap studied law, and is settled in Rockville, Illinois. Abraham Fuller also studied law, and is now in practice in Boston. William Burns, grad., M. D. at Hanover, and practices medicine in Littleton, N. H.

In the above list, the five of the name of Fuller are sons of Rev. Timothy Fuller, who removed from Princeton, and settled on a farm in this town, where he died in 1805. His monument, in the Centre burying ground, bears the following inscription:

"Sacred to the memory of the Rev. Timothy Fuller,
Pastor of the Church in Princeton.

"Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed, and this
mortal must put on immortality.

"Truth, virtue, piety, his life displayed,
On love divine his soul by faith reposed;
Frail nature shrank, but Christ the ransom paid,
Dispelled the mist, and heavenly bliss disclosed.

"Manibus date lilia plenis
Purpureos spargam flores. — *Virg.*

"Natus 19 May, 1739, o. s. Obiit 3 July, 1805."

LIST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BAR WHO HAVE PRACTISED IN THIS TOWN.

Hon. Joshua Atherton, father of Hon. C. H. Atherton, and grandfather of Hon. C. G. Atherton, was descended from an ancient family in Dorchester, Mass. He was born at Harvard; graduated at Harvard University, 1762; studied law at Worcester; first opened his office at Petersham, in 1765; married Abigail Goss, daughter of the Rev. Thomas Goss of Bolton; moved to Litchfield in the latter part of 1765; moved across the river to Merrimack, and opened his office in 1767; here his family resided till the beginning of 1773, when he settled at Amherst; there died, in March, 1809, aged 72. He was a representative and senator in the General Court, and subsequently Attorney General of the State.

Matthew Thornton, 2d, married Fannie Curtis, of Amherst; died in 1804; left two daughters. (See p. 51.)

Stephen Crooker was a native of Eastown, Mass.; opened his office in Merrimack in 1814; married Sarah, daughter of Dea. Aaron Gage; died in 1824, leaving five sons.

James B. Thornton. (See p. 35.)

Hon. James Underwood Parker, son of Dea. Matthew Parker, of Litchfield, graduated at Dartmouth College, in 1820; read law with James Parker, B. J. Gilbert and A. Rogers; came to Merrimack soon after; married Mary Holkins, of Hanover, who died at the age of twenty, and he married Rebecca, daughter of Dea. Augustus Lund, of this town. Mr. Parker is this year President of the Senate of New Hampshire.

PHYSICIANS IN MERRIMACK.

Dr. Joseph Barnes, from Plymouth county, Mass., was here previous to 1746.

Dr. Herris Elery Fudgar was in town in 1766.

Dr. Allen Toothaker was here some years, and died June 12, 1775. He married Esther, daughter of Capt. Benjamin French. He died young, and his widow married Timothy Taylor, Esq.

Dr. Matthew Thornton came to this town about 1775. (See p. 33.)

Dr. Charles Proctor came here about 1778.

Dr. David Norwood, about 1780.

Dr. Robert Taggart, about 1782.

Dr. Roger Toothaker was here several years subsequent to 1784.

Dr. Abel Goodrich studied medicine with Dr. Bowers, of Billerica; came here in 1784. He married Mary, daughter of Dea. Jonathan Cummings; was elected Fellow of the New Hampshire Medical Society; died in 1841. (See p. 34.)

Dr. Flagg, here in 1807, and after.

Dr. Peter Manning, a native of Townsend, Mass.; studied medicine with Dr. Carter, of Lancaster, and Dr. Goodrich; first settled in Hollis; came to Merrimack previous to 1818, and remained till 1841, when he removed to Lowell. He married Elizabeth Kimball, who died in 1833, and he afterwards married Nancy Searns. He was a member of the District Medical Society.

Dr. Barnard E. Hoyt, a native of Newtown, N. H., studied with Dr. Gale of N.; attended lectures at Hanover; graduated M. D., as is supposed, at Brunswick; came to Merrimack in 1833; married Ann P. Cotton; died July, 1839. He was a member of the District Medical Society.

Dr. Harrison Eaton, a native of Hopkinton, N. H., studied with Dr. Call and Dr. Cressey; attended lectures at Hanover in 1833 and 1834; graduated M. D. at Berkshire Medical Institution, 1836; practiced two years in Weare, and came here, 1839; married Charlotte M., daughter of Benjamin Eaton, of Hopkinton; he is a member of the District Medical Society, and in 1842 was elected Fellow of New Hampshire Medical Society.

Dr. William V. Mazcon, a native of Chester, N. Y., studied with Dr. Potter; attended lectures in 1840, at Woodstock, Vt.; came here in 1840; married Sarah Ann, daughter of the late Martin Crooker, of Merrimack.

Dr. Marshall Merriam, a native of Concord, Mass., graduated at Yale College, in 1832, and graduated M. D. at the Medical College in Philadelphia; practiced ten years in Pittsburgh; came thence to this place in 1844.

A LIST OF THE REPRESENTATIVES FROM MERRIMACK, IN GENERAL COURT.

John Chamberlain, many years previous to 1775.
 Jacob McGaw, 1775 and 1782.
 Timothy Taylor, 1793 and 1794.
 James Thornton, 1796, 1806, 1808, 1809, 1810, 1812.
 Simeon Cummings, 1797.
 Samuel Foster, 1800 to 1805, inclusive.
 Samuel McConihe, 1807, 1833, 1834.
 Daniel Ingalls, 1811, 1815, 1816.
 Henry Fields, 1813, 1814.
 Aaron Gage, Jr., 1817 to 1824, inclusive.
 Henry T. Ingalls, 1825, 1826.
 James B. Thornton, 1827 to 1830, inclusive.
 Joseph Litchfield, 1831, 1832.
 Samuel Barron, 1835, 1836.
 Oliver Spalding, 1837, 1838.
 Francis Odell, 1839, 1840.
 Robert McGaw, 1841.
 Leonard Walker, 1842, 1843.
 James U. Parker, 1844, 1845.
 David Jones, 1846.

Previous to 1780, Merrimack and Bedford, and sometimes Litchfield, united in the choice of a representative. Wiseman Claggett, of Litchfield, was chosen in 1777; Samuel Patten, of Bedford, in 1778; John Orr, of Bedford, in 1779.

TOWN OFFICERS IN MERRIMACK.

Moderators of Annual Town Meeting.

John Usher, 1746; Jonathan Cummings, Phinehas Underwood, Joseph Blanchard, Dr. Joseph Barnes, Edward G. Lutwyche, John Chamberlain, Jonathan Blanchard, William Auld, Thomas Barnes, Simeon Cummings, Matthew Thornton, Sen., Timothy Taylor, Jacob McGaw, James Thornton, Dr. Abel Goodrich, Simeon Kenney, Henry Fields, Daniel Ingalls, Thomas McCauley, Solomon Danforth, Stephen Crooker, Solomon Danforth, Jr., Henry T. Ingalls, Samuel McConihe, Martin Crooker, Samuel Barron, Jr., Oliver Spalding, David Jones, Joseph B. Holt.

Town Clerks.

Phinehas Underwood, 1746; Joseph Blanchard, Samuel Caldwell, Edward G. Lutwyche, Jonathan Cummings, Jr., John Neal, Augustus Blanchard, Simeon Cummings, Jacob McGaw, Ebenezer Parker, Samuel McKean, Solomon Danforth, James Thornton, Daniel Ingalls, Samuel McConihe, Samuel Fields, Henry T. Ingalls, Samuel Barron, Jr., Oliver Spalding, Isaac N. Center, Horatio G. Hutchins, John Anderson, Caleb Jones.

Selectmen.

Phinehas Underwood, John Usher, Zechariah Stearns, William Lund, Jonathan Cummings, William Patten, Joseph Barnes, Thomas Vickare, James Moore, John Chamberlain, Joseph Blanchard, William Auld, Charity Lund, Thomas Barnes, Samuel Caldwell, James Minot, John McClench, Timothy Taylor, Samuel Spalding, Benjamin Baxter, Solomon Hutchinson, Jonathan Cummings, Jr., John Neal, Hugh Ramsey, Augustus Blanchard, Ebenezer Nichols, Henry Fields, Jacob McGaw,

Simeon Cummings, William Wallace, Ebenezer Hills, Stephen Wilkins, William Barron, Benjamin Vickare, Matthew Thornton, Samuel Foster, Marstin Fields, Ebenezer Parker, Jotham Gillis, Zacheus Walker, Solomon Danforth, James Gilmore, Samuel McKean, James Combs, Aaron Gage, Samuel Spalding, Jr., Cornelius Barnes, Samuel Cotton, James Lund, Benjamin Nourse, John Aiken, Simeon Kenny, Daniel Ingalls, Nathan Parker, Robert McGaw, Sam'l McConihe, Sam'l Fields, Sam'l Barron, Cosmo Lund, Aaron Gage, Jr., Solomon Danforth, Jr., Thomas McCauley, John Conant, Abel Goodrich, Sam'l Barron, Jr., Levi Wilkins, Martin Crooker, Daniel L. Herrick, John P. Wallace, Francis Odall, Oliver Spalding, Jr., James McCauley, Jona. Barron, David Jones, Joseph N. Gage, Leonard Kendall, Jr., Augustus Cragin, Joseph B. Holt, Joseph Barnes, Wm. B. Wheeler, Obadiah Marland, Ephraim W. Livingston, Leonard Walker, Elkanah P. Parker, Wm. McKean, John Gilson, Edward Wheeler, Dan'l Moore, Jr., Daniel T. Ingalls, James Parker.

SCHOOLS.

The amount of money appropriated to the public schools in town last year was \$615.50. The number of scholars attending was 362. A superintending school committee is annually appointed, who examine teachers, visit schools, and make their report, which is printed by the town,—and they are paid for their services. The number of districts is twelve:

No. 1.	Centre of town.	No. 7.	Robbins' Mills.
" 2.	Gage District.	" 8.	Goodrich District.
" 3.	Reed's Ferry.	" 9.	Souhegan Village.
" 4.	Thornton's Ferry.	" 10.	N. W. corner of town.
" 5.	Pond District.	" 11.	Eayres District.
" 6.	Parish District.	" 12.	Centreville.

CONFESSION OF FAITH AND COVENANT OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN MERRIMACK.

Articles of Faith.

1. We believe that there is but one true God, who is the Creator, Preserver and Governor of the universe; and that he is eternal, unchangeable and infinite in every natural and moral perfection.
2. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God, and that they are our only perfect rule of doctrinal belief and religious practice.
3. We believe that God is revealed in the Scriptures as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one in essence, and equal in every attribute and honor.
4. We believe that God has made all things for himself; that known unto Him are all things from the beginning; that He governs all things according to the counsel of His own will.
5. We believe that the divine law, and the principles and the administration of the divine government, are perfectly holy, just and good, and that all rational creatures are bound to obey and honor them.
6. We believe that God at first made man in His own image, in a state of holiness; but man fell from that state by eating the forbidden fruit; and that in consequence of that sin, all the posterity of Adam are by nature destitute of holiness.
7. We believe that Christ, the Son of God, has, by his obedience, sufferings and death, made a full atonement for sin; that he is the only Redeemer of sinners, and that he now offers salvation to all on condition of faith and repentance.
8. We believe that such is the sinfulness of human nature, that none will come to Christ, except they are drawn by the special influence of the Holy Spirit.
9. We believe that those who embrace the gospel were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him

in love: and that they are saved not by works of righteousness which they have done, but by the free and distinguishing mercy of God, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

10. We believe that those who embrace the Gospel, although they may fall into sin, never will be left finally to perish.

11. We believe that all mankind must one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive a just and final sentence of retribution according to the deeds done in the body; and that at the day of judgment the state of all will be unalterably fixed; and that the punishment of the wicked and happiness of the righteous will be eternal.

12. We believe that Christ has a visible Church on earth, into which none, in the sight of God, but real believers, and none, in the sight of men, but visible believers, have a right of admission.

13. We believe that the sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper; that believers in regular standing of the Church, only, can consistently partake of the Lord's Supper; that visible believers and their household only can be admitted to the ordinance of baptism; and that it is the duty, as well as the privilege, of the former, to dedicate their households to the Lord in this ordinance.

Covenant.

In the fear of God you are now to attend to his most gracious Covenant, and may you, by the help of His grace, give a sincere and full assent thereto.

Covenant. You give up yourself to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; choosing the Lord Jehovah as your God, Jesus Christ as your Prophet, Priest and King, and only Saviour, the Holy Ghost, as your Sanctifier, Guide and Comforter: promising, by the aid of divine grace, to observe His Word and Ordinances, honor His name, reverence His Sabbaths, to walk in the way of His holy requirements, seek the prosperity of His kingdom, and devote yourself and possessions to His service:—You submit yourself to the discipline of Christ in this His Church, and engage to attend regularly on the worship of God in public, in your families and in secret; and in all things to study to live as becomes the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus.

This you covenant and promise.

On your thus professing and promising, we receive you as a member of this His Church, and admit you to the full enjoyment of all its privileges, promising, through divine grace assisting us, to aid you in the duties of a Christian life by our prayers and practical watchfulness; expecting in return the same offices from you, that the purposes of this holy covenant may be answered.

The Lord make us faithful to Himself and to each other.

There is a Society associated with the church entitled the "Merrimack Religious Society," which assumes the pecuniary responsibility of supporting the Gospel. Its annual meeting, according to the constitution, is on the first Monday in May. To defray the expenses of the parish, subscriptions are first solicited from those who do not belong to the Society, and then a tax is levied on the members of the Society.

In 1837 they abandoned the old house, which had been occupied as a place of worship over 80 years, and erected a neat and commodious meeting house, which is located upon the river road from Manchester to Nashua, near Souhegan village. The dimensions of the house are 40 by 60 feet. The cost of it was \$3,000. It contains 66 slips, and the orchestra is supplied with an organ.

ADDITIONAL NOTICES OF SOME FAMILIES THAT WERE EARLY IN TOWN.

Aiken, Lt. John, brother of Dea. Phineas, of Bedford, settled on a farm now owned by Nathan Parker, Jr., before 1790,—had 12 children,—and was a man distinguished for his and industry rectitude.

Auld, William, one of the earliest in town, lived on the farm of the late Joseph Nichols. His children were,—William, born 1747, Lettis, James, Hannah, John Benjamin, Jean, Sarah.

Arbuckle, William, settled on farm owned by Mr. Rufus Blood, previous to 1748. He built the house west of Mr. Blood's. Was from north of Ireland.

Barron, Samuel, in town in 1780,—married Sibell, daughter of Dea. Jonathan Cummings, Jr. His father, Capt. Moses, was one of the first settlers in Bedford; went there from Chelmsford, Mass., previous to 1740. A son of his was the first male child born in Bedford. The children of Samuel were four sons and one daughter. His son, Samuel, Jr., married Anne Moore, and now lives in town.

Barnes, Lt. Thomas, from Plymouth Co., Mass., settled where Mr. George Boyson now lives, previous to 1746; had four sons and five daughters. Dr. Joseph Barnes, brother of Thomas, was the first physician in town, and was the father of Lient. Reuben, whose children now live here. *See Back cover*

Cummings, Dea. Jonathan, from Dunstable, born 1703, was one of the earliest settlers. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Capt. Joseph Blanchard. Among his children were Benjamin, born in 1732, Simeon and Jonathan. Simeon was Justice of the Peace and an influential citizen. He had mills at Atherton's Falls, long known as Cummiugs' mills. He married Hannah Bowers. Dea. Jonathan, Jr., married Deborah Russell—had eleven sons and five daughters—lived near where Mr. Reuben H. Pratt now lives—often held town offices, and was a useful citizen.

Danforth, Dea. Solomon, from Billerica; born 1756; came to Merrimack in 1776; married 1781, to Sarah, daughter of Simeon Cummings, Esq. He was many years an active man in town business; lived on the farm now owned by Dr. Merriam; had twelve children, three sons and nine daughters, who were all excellent singers, and who, in connection with the twelve children of Deacon Nourse, formed a considerable part of the singing choir for many years.

Eayres, William, son of Joseph Eayres, who was born in Londonderry, 1728, William was born in Dunstable, (now Nashua,) 1764; came to Merrimack in 1780; married Hannah Foster, of Milford; died 26th March, 1846, aged 82. He was remarkable for his industry, strict integrity, meekness and humility. Few laboring men have treasured up more of the Sacred Scriptures, or are better versed in general history.

Farwell, Lieut. Oliver, from Tyngsborough, in 1761; at an early period kept a public house where Mr. J. B. Holt now keeps. His wife, Abigail, lived to be almost a hundred years old. The family was among the wealthy and influential inhabitants. Fifty years ago the first one-horse waggon was brought into town. Chaises were owned only by Farwell, Judge Thornton, Dr. Burnap, J. McGaw, and Deacon Gage.

Fields, Marstin, began where Mr. Elijah Averill now lives. Henry, at Mr. Seaverns', (Fields' Bridge.) Joshua, at the place of the late Joseph Litchfield. John, at Mr. Colburn's farm. They were brothers, and came from Andover in 1771 and 1772.

Foster, Samuel, was many years a prominent citizen. He lived in the house next south of Mr. Samuel Barron's.

Gage, Aaron, came from Bradford, Mass., 1773; was the father of Deacon Aaron Gage, and the grandfather of Aaron Gage, Esq., now of this town. His descendants are numerous. Deacon Gage married Martha Stephens, of Andover; was a regular, upright citizen, remarkably constant at meeting. He reared a respectable family of ten children, many of whom now live in this town and Bedford.

Gillis, Hugh, with his younger brother, *Thomas*, came from the north of Ireland. He married Sarah Arbuckle, sister of William, settled in Merrimack in 1746. His children were Thomas, Josiah, Jonathan, Jotham, Rachel, Sally and Betsey. Thomas lived with his father on the place known as the "Gillis farm," and left two children, John and Nancy Quigly. John died in 1845; was the father of Mark, Thomas and Charles Gillis, in Nashua, and David and Horace, in Manchester. Jotham, son of Hugh, now lives at Piscataquacag, and is in his ninetieth year.

Sarah Arbuckle, wife of Hugh Gillis, was a strong woman, both in mind and body. She died Feb. 20th, 1829, aged 101 years and 7 months. On the day she was 100 years old her pastor preached at her house. She retained, and was able afterwards to repeat, portions of the discourse. When she was about 18, during the Indian war, she was left with her mother and little brothers and sisters, her father and elder brothers having joined the army. One morning, while engaged in making "hasty pudding" for breakfast, she was called to the door by a loud knock, and was not a little alarmed at the sight of a fierce-looking Indian. By signs, he made known that he was wounded, and wanted refreshment. Her sympathies were aroused. She dressed his wound, and he remained till he was well. Some months after a party of Indians suddenly burst into the house, seized and bound her brothers, and one, with a yell, had raised his tomahawk to strike her, when another Indian appeared; a few words were spoken in their language, and they instantly released their prisoners and departed quietly. Their preserver proved to be the Indian for whom she had acted the Samaritan.

Herrick, Daniel L., son of Josiah Herrick, of Wenham, Mass., came to Merrimack in 1802; married Hannah Weston, of Mount Vernon. Herrick is a Danish name. The family trace their genealogy back to the eleventh century, when their ancestor came from Denmark to England. The ancestor of the numerous families in this country settled in Salem or its vicinity at a very early period.

Harris, Ebenezer and *Azariah*, sons of Ebenezer, of Dunstable, settled in the south part of the town about 1795.

Hills, Ebenezer, married Elizabeth Hassell, and came to town in 1752 or 1753. His children were Stephen, born 1754, Ebenezer, Joseph, Lydia, Benjamin and Elizabeth. The farm on which he settled is now in possession of Mr. Joseph Hills, son of Ebenezer, Jr.

Ingalls, Dea. Daniel, son of Henry, came from Andover in 1791; married Mary, daughter of Cornelius Tarbell, Esq.; had four daughters,—Polly, Sarah, Elizabeth, Rebecca,—and three sons, Daniel T., Henry T., and Putnam. As a town officer, and an officer in the Church, he shared a large degree of public confidence, and was a useful citizen.

Kenny, Simeon, son of Simeon Kenny, of Middletown, Mass.; fitted for Sophomore class in college at Byfield; came to Merrimack in 1797; married Lydia A. Peabody, of Middletown. He has had under his instruction over 700 different pupils, many of them in the languages and in surveying.

Lund, William, son of Thomas of Dunstable, was born 1686; married Rachel ———; was carried captive by the Indians 1723; died 1768; aged 81. His children were William, born 1717, Rachel, Charity and Mary. Among the children of William, 2d, was Dea. Augustus Lund, who married Johannah Smith, and had two sons and three daughters. The children of Charity were Stephen, born 1754, Lucy, Elizabeth, Rachel, Charity, Sarah, John, Hannah, James, Cosmo, Jeruthmeel and William. John, the last survivor of the sons, died last September, aged 80. He married Mary Chambers.

McConihe, John, was born in Argylishire, Scotland, and removed thence with his parents to the north of Ireland; had four brothers and three sisters; married in Ireland and came to America with the first settlers of Londonderry; removed thence with his two sons, John and Samuel, to Merrimack; was then an aged man, and died before 1760. John 2d, had three sons—Samuel, now of this town, Isaac, of Troy, N. Y., and John, who lately lived on the old homestead. He fell from the beams in his barn, Sept. 14, 1840, and survived but a few hours. Samuel had four sons,—John, James, Samuel and Hugh,—who are all dead, but their descendants are among us.

McClure, William, one of the Scotch-Irish settlers, was in town, and had a son, William, old enough to be taxed in 1749. William 2d married a sister of William

Arbuckle; had two sons, William and John. William 3d married Rebecca, sister of Dea. Danforth, and was the father of William 4th, who now lives on the farm of his ancestors.

McGaw, Jacob, was married Aug. 5, 1773, to Margaret Orr, daughter of Mr. John Orr, of Bedford, and sister of Hon. John Orr. His children are John, Margaret, Jacob, Robert, Rebecca, Isaac, Martha. John Orr, Sen., the father of Mrs. McGaw, was one of the first settlers in Bedford. He married Margaret Hamel. They both died in one week, of the yellow fever, in 1752. Robert McGaw, now of this town, married Sarah, daughter of Wm. Morrison, D. D., of Londonderry.

Nourse, Dea. Benjamin, a native of Danvers, Mass., was of Welch descent, his ancestors having come from Wales, and settled in Salem, at an early period. He came to Merrimack in 1782, and married Ruth, the daughter of Cornelius Tarbell, Esq., then of this town; had six sons and six daughters. They were all fine vocalists. Says one of their number, "The children of Dr. Burnap, and of his five contemporary Deacons, were numerous, the whole number being 63; viz., Dr. Burnap had 13, Dea. Gage 10, Dea. Danforth 12, Dea. Nourse 12, Dea. Lund 9, Dea. Ingalls 7. Most of this number grew up simultaneously to manhood, and occupied a considerable space in the social features of the town for many years. Perhaps all the descendants of these men would people a town." Dea. Nourse was a Justice of the Peace, an upright man, and a lover of public worship and other religious institutions.

Parker, Nathan, son of Matthew, and grandson of Rev. Thomas Parker, of Dracut, Mass. Rev. Thomas was the son of Josiah, of Cambridge, was born Dec. 7, 1700; graduated at Cambridge 1718; settled in Dracut 1721; died March 18, 1765. His sons were Thomas, William, John, Matthew and Jonathan. The children of Matthew were Thomas, Nathan, Matthew, James, William and six daughters. Matthew, 2d, married Sarah, daughter of Judge Underwood, and was the father of James U. Parker, of this town.

Nathan married Mary McQuesten, and came to this town April, 1798. On the 76th anniversary of his birth, Jan. 1, 1843, his children and grandchildren, just fifty in number, were all together around the paternal fireside. They are all singers, and the harmony of voices, as also the harmony of feeling, that has always existed among them, rendered the occasion deeply interesting. Since that time the number of descendants has increased to fifty-eight, viz., eighteen children, including those by marriage, thirty-nine grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. Most of them live in this town.

Patten, Dea. William; wife's name Elizabeth; children were Mary, born 1740, William, Rachel, Margaret, John, James, Martha.

Stearns, Zechariah, was in town in 1746; lived north of Mr. Holt's tavern; was then considerably advanced in years. Zechariah, Daniel, John and Nathan are all supposed to be his sons.

Spalding, Samuel, born in Chelmsford, Mass., Feb. 1, 1726; was one of the first settlers in Merrimack, where he owned a large tract of land north and west of Natick pond, from which he gave several of his sons farms of one hundred acres each, viz., Samuel, Oliver, Silas and Asa. He was lieutenant and served in New York in the Continental army for a long time. He died in Merrimack, Sept. 11, 1797, aged 71 years; married Sarah Woods, of Chelmsford, May 3, 1753. She died in Merrimack of spotted fever, April 10, 1815, aged 85 years. Their family burial is at the old meeting house lot. Their children were Samuel, Abijah, Sarah, Henry, Oliver, Isaac, Silas, Asa. The gun he bore in the Revolutionary army in New York is in possession of Capt. Ira Spalding.

Thornton, Matthew, had five children, namely, James, Matthew, Andrew, Polly, (who married Silas Betton,) Hannah, (who married John McGaw.) James had three sons, Matthew, Thomas and James Buonaparte, and two daughters. A son

of James B. is the only male descendant of Judge T. that now survives to bear his name.

Wilson, Jacob, came from Billerica, Mass. His sons were Jacob, Jonathan, Reuben and Jesse. Jonathan was the father of Dea. Joseph, who now lives on the old farm.

In making a hasty sketch of some of the early families, I have only used materials that incidentally came to hand. It is not as full, and does not embrace as many families as it ought, it is because I have not had the means of extending it.

Among the names of those who settled on the north side of the Souhegan river, from 1740 to 1755, and who have not been already mentioned, are Thomas McLaughlin, Patrick Taggart, John Roby. (who lived where Mr. Nevins' tavern is.) Robert Gilmore, Joseph Farmer, (who first settled the farm where Robert McGaw now lives,) James Moore, Robert Nesmith, Robert McCormack, John McClench, John Burns, James Cowan, Thomas Wallace, Thomas Vickare, (who lived where Mr. Isaac Shedd now lives, and a numerous family of sons,) Alexander McAuley, (who lived on what is now the "town farm"—his son, Lt. Alexander, also lived there,) Alexander Miller, James M not, David Thornton, William Thornton, David Smith, (who first settled the farm of Nathan Parker, Sen.) Ten or fifteen years later we find the names of John McGilvray and Richard Hale, whose descendants are among us.

A large number of the early settlers on the north side of the Souhegan were descended from the Scotch Presbyterians, who, in the reign of James, were established in the north of Ireland; but, disliking that country, they sought a home in America. The first party came over in 1718, and for many years others continued to follow. They brought with them the art of manufacturing linen, and of weaving; and they first introduced the culture of the potatoe in this part of America.

TABLE OF MORTALITY.

	Jan'y	Feb.	Mar.	April.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total.
1819	2	2	3	1	1	2	1	1			2		15
1820	2	3			1	1			9	4	1	1	22
1824	1	6	1	1	1	1	4	2		3	4		24
1825	4	3	2		2	1	3	3	4	3	2		27
1826	3		3		1	2		1	2		1		13
1827	3	3	1	2	1	1		3		2	1		17
1828	5		2	1	3		4	2		3	3	1	24
1829	1	3	3	3		1	2		1	2	1	1	18
1830	2	2	3	2	2		3	2			1		17
1831	2	5	4		1	2		1	1	6		1	23
1832	2	1		9	1	3	5	2		3		1	27
1833	5	1		1	2			5	11		1	2	28
1834	2		2	4		1	2	1	1	3	1	4	21
1835	4		2	1	3			4	3	1		1	19
1836		3	3	1	2		1	1	2	6	2	2	23
1837			3	2				3		1	1	1	11
1838	1	6		2	2	1	3				2		21
1839	1	1			2	2	3			2	1		20
1840	2	3	2		1	2		1	2	1	4		18
	42	42	34	30	26	20	31	36	36	40	28	23	388

The above table is prepared from a record kept by the late Dr. Goodrich. The whole number of deaths in town, as above, for 19 years, was 388. This number includes several strangers who died in town, as well as those residents of the town who were temporarily absent. The highest number was in 1833,—28. The lowest in 1837,—11. The average number per annum, after deducting strangers, was 20, being about one to every 56 of the population. One lived to be over 101; 5 were between 90 and 100; 28 between 80 and 90; 28 between 70 and 80; 29 between 60 and 70; 19 between 50 and 60; 33 between 40 and 50; 35 between 30 and 40; 41 between 20 and 30; 27 between 10 and 20; 124 below ten years old. Age unknown, 24.

Widow McClench, not included in the table above, lived to be 100 years old, and several of the early settlers exceeded 90 years.

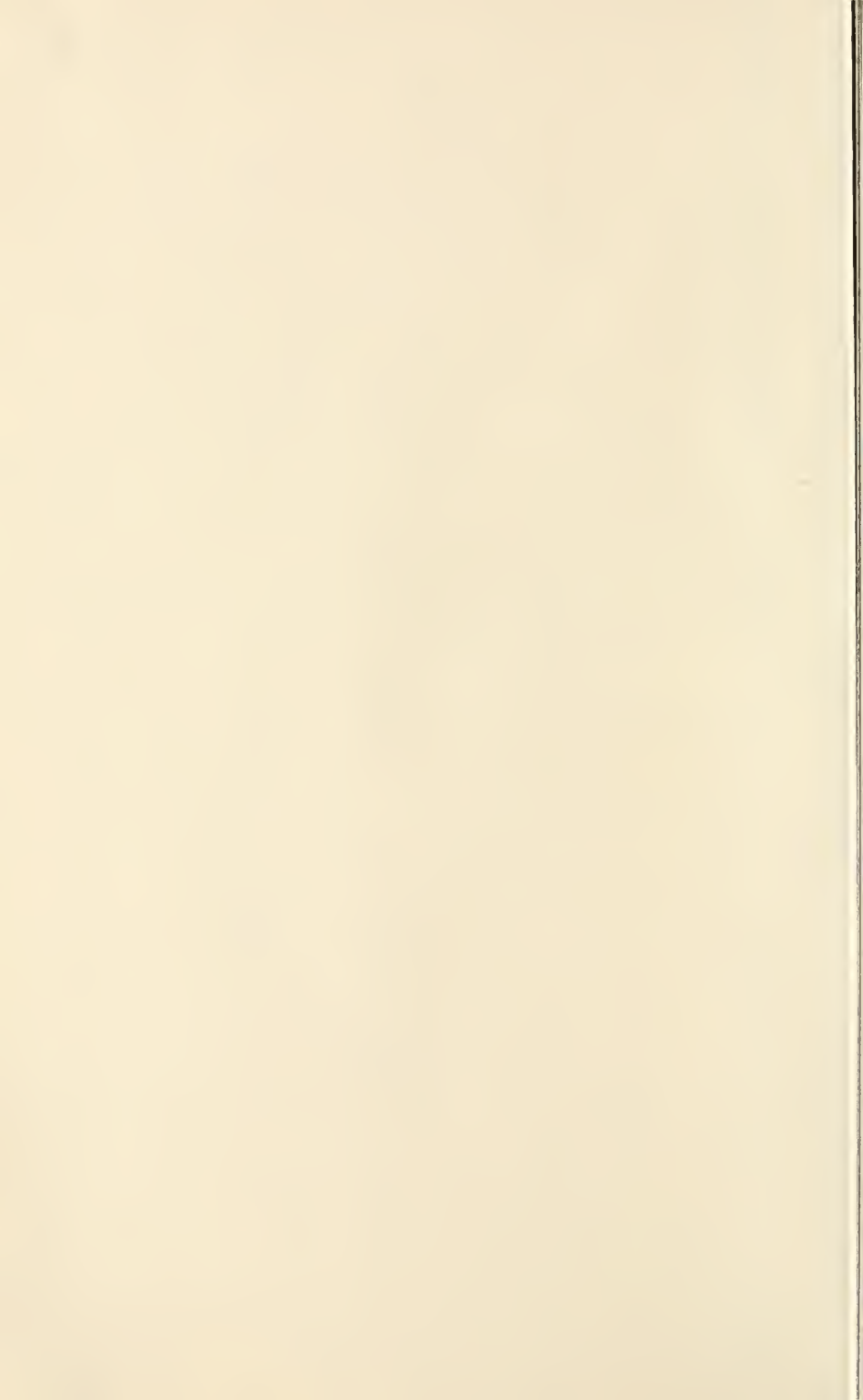
It is believed that the location of the town is favorable to health and longevity. Malignant fevers have never prevailed here, as in many river towns; nor is consumption as frequent as in more damp and more bleak locations.

Barnes - Dr. Joseph went from Hingham Mass.
w. his wife Joanna Sprague descendant of
Richard Warren of the Mayflower. Mond
across the Merrimack to Litchfield buried
Derry Road Cemetery in lot with Dea. Joseph
and Sarah Hills (descendant of Joseph Hill
founder of Malden) Servd in Rev. also his two
Sons. Reuben and Dea. Joseph
(1) Thomas (2) Peter (3) John (4) Joseph (5) Joseph

(6) Reuben (7) Jane m. James R. Campbell. b. Wrentham
ch. Ida E. m. Lyman E. Rockwell N.H.
Fannie J. born Wallingford Ct.

See. History of Hingham Mass
Morrison's Hist. of Wrentham N.H.
Hist. of New Haven Co. Ct.

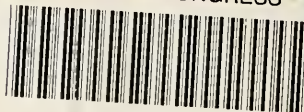
James R. & Jane Campbell buried in Memorial
Cemetery Wallingford Ct.



FEB 78



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